POLICIES, PLANS, AND THE PUBLIC . . . By Norman Angell

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THE Saturday Review OF LITERATURE

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"BRAVE MEN"
by Ernie Pyle
Reviewed by Brig.-Gen. Donald Armstrong

"BASES OVERSEAS"
by George Weller
Reviewed by Robert Okin

"ARMISTICE 1918"
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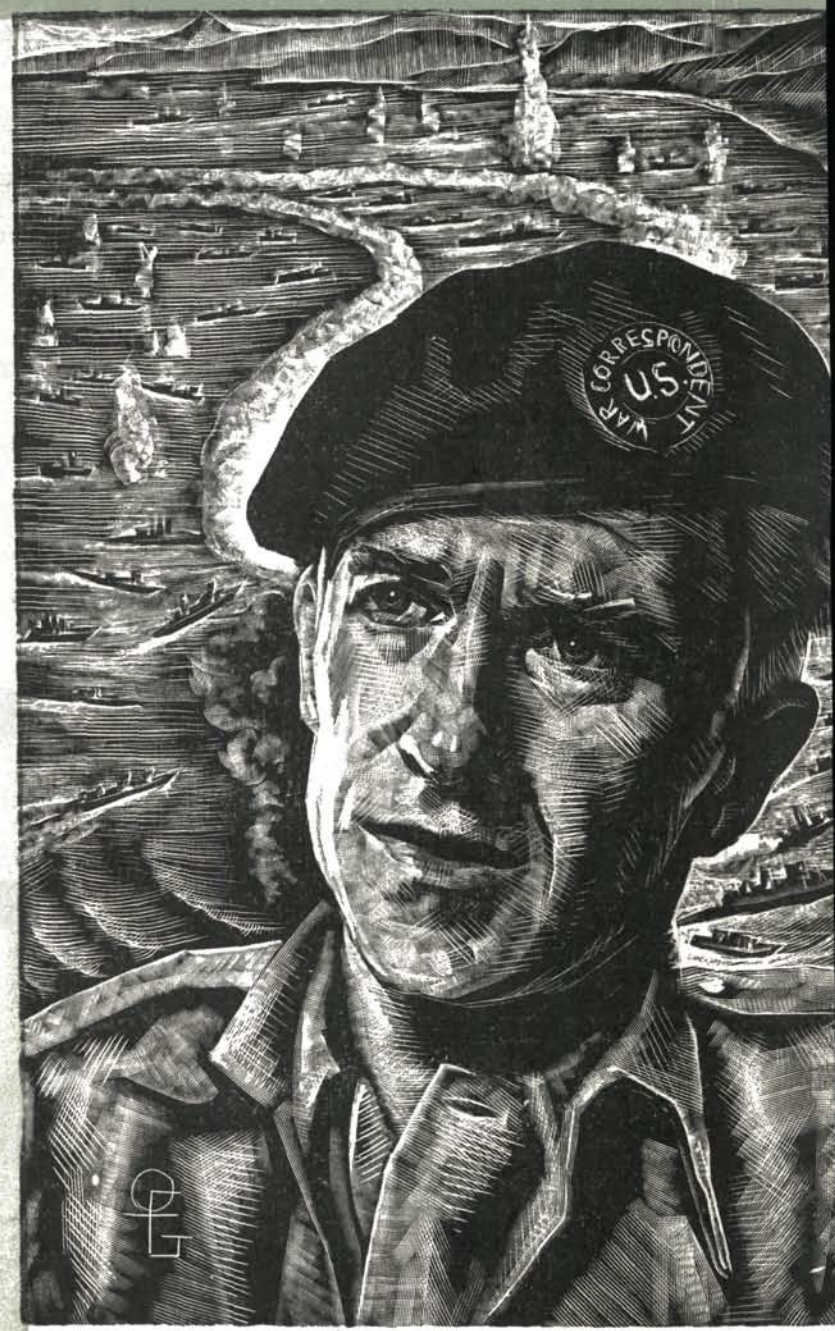

—S.R.L. Wood Engraving by Frances O'Brien Garfield

No one but Ernie Pyle "has bridged the gap between the fighting men at the front and the civilian population at home." (See page 7)

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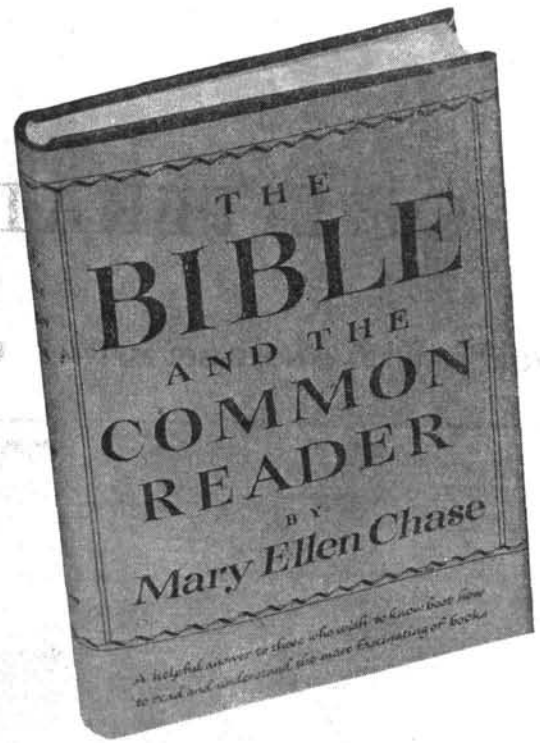

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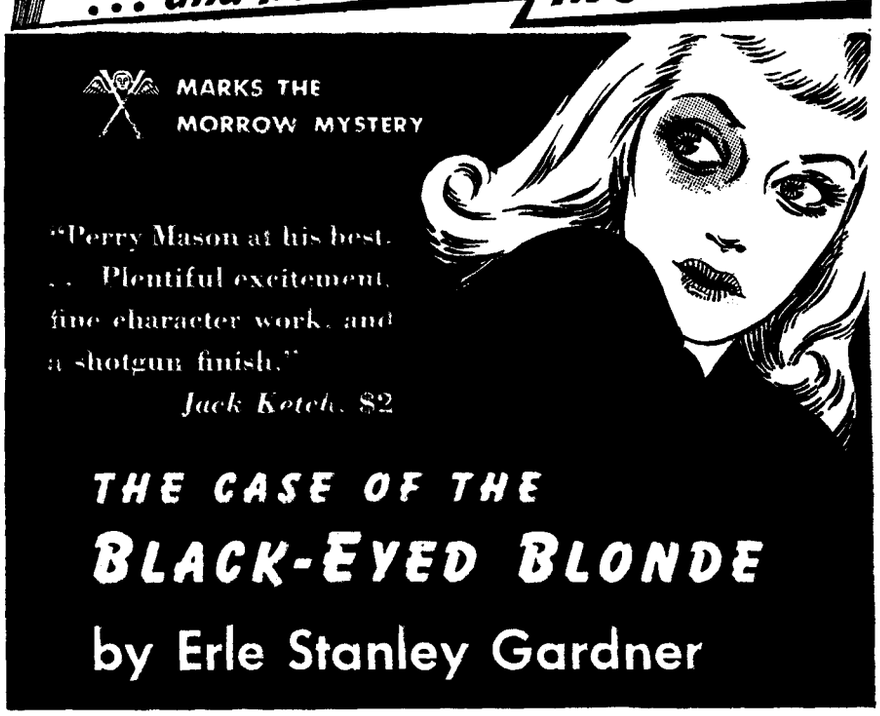
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A letter from a friend

SRL readers have doubtless been reading the fine public reviews of SAMUEL JOHNSON by Joseph Wood Krutch. Perhaps they would also be interested in a more intimate, personal opinion which is in our files. Mark Van Doren, who is a warm and oldtime friend of Joe Krutch, was the first person to read the final draft of the manuscript several months ago. Mark told us that he had straightway written Joe the longest longhand letter he'd ever written anyone. Next time we saw Joe we asked to see the letter. We think it is a notable piece of critical appreciation and, with both our friends' permission, we reproduce part of it here.

The Commander Hotel
Cambridge, Mass

February 24, 1944

Dear Joe:

In this room, during periods of truancy from the Harvard Committee on the objectives of General Education with which I came on Tuesday to confer, I have finished your *Johnson*, and now I take up my pen in something like the mood of Gibbon when he laid his down—the pleasure of reading you lasted so long that melancholy mingles with it at this moment when I must say: There is no more of either Joe or Johnson that I can explore henceforth as one who advances over strange, even if once familiar, ground. I will read the book many times again, but never with the excitement of discovery which for two weeks I have steadily and even more intensely felt.

Lengthy as this letter may become, I fear it will fail to tell you how great I think your book is—how sensible, how wise, how full, and at the same time how rich with something I can only call right feeling. Your keeping to the mean between a simple moralism and an equally simple scientism concerning your subject—a merely 18th century and a merely 20th century view-required imagination, and it is that supreme virtue of the soul that has given you, I suspect, the privilege of seeing Johnson as he eternally is—a person not to be changed by place or time, if he will permit me to quote a poet whom he did not regularly admire. To see him thus exactly as he is—for he still *is*, thanks to you—one has to know how to be at the same instant humorous and serious. You are invariably both, with the result that any competent reader will acknowledge you as unique in your authority . . .

I don't know how much work there is still to do with the quotations and citations—"verify this." But you should take all the time you need; and remember that there has to be an index. I am not officious, I hope; but I should be very unhappy if I couldn't find perhaps a hundred choice things—the remark about those who can manage trade, the story of the atonement for contumacy against his father, the analysis of his political thought (if thought), and your own compendious description of the metaphysical poet as a soul that has lost its wits. These, and I don't know how many other things. The book is studded with them, and you owe it to any reader to make them available to him again. He will remember them, but not always with the accuracy he would desire. I have already discovered, in my attempts to say to others what Johnson said, how hard it is to match the perfection and power of his monosyllables—for was not his speech a grapeshot discharge of little words, bird-bolts (as Olivia says to Malvolio) grown into cannon-bullets?

I fell in love with Mrs. Thrale, even to the point of wondering whether you should have called her hysterical, superficial, etc. She doubtless was but I am equally sure that she was made to be loved—by Thrale, by Johnson and by Tiozzi, and finally by the reader She couldn't have been witless if she wrote some of the sentences you quote. She had enough mind, anyway, to insure that her person would be irresistible. Such a woman can be loved on many planes (mine, lest you worry, is pure enough), but she is certain to be loved. That is what your discussion makes clear, even though you don't use the personal words I have used

Boswell you take care of precisely to my taste. Having acknowledged the artist (in the sentence about his power to interpret gesture) you expose the man—and no more cruelly than he deserves, for indeed he asked that this be done.

As for Johnson himself, you conquer his heights by advancing in full faith yet with no taint of superstition. But Johnson himself we can talk about while we yet live.

This is long as hell, but let me say that the discussion of Johnson's criticism more than met the expectations you had aroused in me. You reached his heart when you came to his *Shakespeare*, and you explored the place with full equipment. This is the heart that explains a man whom everybody loved and admired despite the obstacles he put around him. The critic of Shakespeare in Johnson is the man at the moment when he most deeply reveals himself. But I am only *saying* what you have said. Shakespeare tests us; Shakespeare criticizes us. Through Johnson you pass the test A.

I wish I could find a few things in the book to belly-ache about, but having found none I will not pretend that I did. It was written, I seem to know, in some state of health which meant that you always went right with ease. So I could never doubt you, and I didn't.

If these pages embarrass you it is your fault. I only read the book you wrote . . .

Love to Marcelle.

MARK

SAMUEL JOHNSON

599 PAGES, INDEXED AND ILLUSTRATED, $3.75

A BIOGRAPHY BY *Joseph Wood Krutch*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Policies, Plans, and the Public

NORMAN ANGELL

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is the second and concluding article by Mr. Angell on the new books dealing with the problems of the coming peace. Last week, Mr. Angell discussed books concerned primarily with the economics of post-war planning.*

PLEASE consider this situation. John Citizen, very busy with his own affairs, but anxious to become an intelligent, knowledgeable unit of that public opinion which will ultimately determine the shape of the new world of tomorrow, finds on his table some half dozen of the books which have appeared on the subject during the preceding ten days or two weeks. With a view to deciding which aspect is most important and which he should tackle first, he looks at the titles and through the chapter headings of his particular half dozen.* Here are some results:

1. Under the editorship of John B. Whitton is a collection of papers by seven authors—Gordon A. Craig, Gerhart Niemeyer, John B. Whitton, Frank D. Graham, Edward S. Corwin, Jerome S. Bruner, George F. Thomas. The papers are gathered into a single book entitled: "The Second Chance: America and the Peace." The subjects are: "American Foreign Policy," dealing with the last time, the next time, an alternative to world-wide collaboration; "World Order and the Great Powers," discussing power politics, the leadership of the Big Three, Russia, and the West, the limitations of international power and the outlines of an international organization; "Institutions of World Order," discussing the basic principles, functions, sanctions, determination of aggressor; "Economics and Peace," tariffs, international monetary mechanism, international investment; "The Senate and the Peace"; "Public Opinion and the Peace"; "American Ideals and the Peace."

2. The next book, "New Perspectives on Peace," also a collection of papers by different authors, edited by George de Huszar, divides the problem into the historical, the ethnological, the economic, the sociological, the legal, the educational, the psychological, the philosophical, the religious. The chapters are respectively by: Charles C. Colby, Avery Craven, Robert Redfield, Jacob Viner, William Fielding Ogburn, Quincy Wright, Robert J. Havighurst, David Slight, Richard McKean, James Luther Adams.

3. The next book, on "The Strategy of Peace," is by a single author, President Wriston of Brown University, whose chapters are divided as follows: "The Central Issue," "Total War," "The Distinction Between War and Peace," "The Elements of War and Peace," "Reason," "Culture," "Emotion," "Economic Activity." A second part follows, dealing with American commitments under the chapters, "Canada and Greenland," "The Caribbean," "South America," "The Pacific," "The East," "Europe," concluding with a part on a basic treaty of peace.

4. Mr. MacNeil, writing on "An American Peace," divides his book in-

to chapters as follows: "Our Second Chance," "What Is It All About?," "This New World," "The Right of the Individual," "The Right to Think," "The Rights of the State," "A Tragedy of Errors," "A Durable Peace," "The Dawn of the New World Order," "America's New Role," "Our British Neighbors," "Britain's World Position," "What About Russia?," "The Fate of Europe," "Asia's Teeming Millions," "A Final Word or Two."

5. From the University of North Carolina Press comes a book by Hans Kelsen, "Peace through Law," with chapters on "Peace through Force or through Law?," "World State or Confederacy of States?," "International Judiciary," "Economic or Juridical Approach," "Judiciary Without Centralized Executive Power and Legislation," "Legal and Political Conflicts," "Conciliation," "Sovereign Equality of the States as Basis of an International Organization for the Maintenance of Peace," "The Experiences of the League of Nations," "A Permanent League for the Maintenance of Peace," "Individual Responsibility of the Authors of War," "Individual Responsibility Established by General International Law," "Individual Responsibility for Acts of State," "The Question of War Guilt in the First and in the Second World War," "The Punishment of War Crimes," "War Crimes as Violations of International or National Law," "The Plea of Superior Command," "The Jurisdiction Over Prisoners of War," "International Criminal Jurisdiction."

6. And finally there is a book by Mr. William B. Ziff, "The Gentlemen Talk of Peace," whose chapter headings run: "The World Dilemma," "March to Global War," "The New Order," "The Co-Prosperity Sphere," "The Eternal Problem of War," "The Industrial Enigma," "Power Centers of Tomorrow," "The Russias," "Oriental Colossus," "Fabled Land of Ind," "Decline of Empire," "Assignment to Chaos," "Treaties, Pacts, and Coalitions," "Panaceas for Peace," "Organizing Utopia," "The Tragic Struggle of Race," "The Doctrine of Free Man,"

THE SECOND CHANCE: AMERICA AND THE PEACE. Edited by John B. Whitton. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1944. 223 pp. $2.50.

THE NEW PERSPECTIVES ON PEACE. Edited by George B. de Huszar. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1944. 261 pp. $2.

STRATEGY OF PEACE. By Henry M. Wriston. Boston: World Peace Foundation. 1944. 169 pp. $1.

AN AMERICAN PEACE. By Neil MacNeil. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1944. 276 pp. $2.15.

PEACE THROUGH LAW. By Hans Kelsen. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1944. 155 pp. $2.

THE GENTLEMEN TALK OF PEACE. By William B. Ziff. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1944. 530 pp. $3.

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"The Question of Our Defeated Enemies," "Reorganization of Society," "The Union of the West," "A World at Peace."

I hope the reader has not skipped any of the foregoing paragraphs, on the ground that such a list does not appear to be very interesting reading. For if he cannot read the chapter headings, what chance is there that he can read the chapters or the books?

But, it will be objected, it is a physical impossibility for the ordinary busy layman to read through such a selection of books, since long before he had finished with these, and even begun to reconcile in his mind the many different conclusions drawn (for even these five books are sometimes in violent disagreement with each other) —long before the layman has been able to do this, another dozen or score would have appeared equally worth his attention, with still further problems of reconciliation. What is he to do about it?

Is one answer that most of these books are not intended for the lay public, but for specialists, professors, and students of political science? Even so, it puts the question in another form: How is the specialist knowledge to percolate down to the politicians and general public who must finally decide? Through the next generation of students? But we shall need this knowledge, or some of it, within the next year or two.

THIS reviewer has certainly no ready answer to give and no panacea for this stubborn problem. All he suggests is that we cannot just ignore the difficulty of public understanding, since without it the effort represented by these books—some of them very good books indeed—is wasted, so far as influence upon action and events in any near future is concerned.

There are, however, certain considerations which may suggest useful criteria for readers puzzled by many divergent and mutually exclusive plans. There is no such thing as a single and perfect plan or constitution for the world; nor is such necessary for a peaceful civilization. Sweden and Switzerland are both highly civilized and successful democracies, of roughly the same cultural development. They have quite different constitutions, one being a monarchy, the other a republican confederation. Because Spain, Germany, and Argentina are republics they are not necessarily freer or more democratic than "conservative monarchies" like Holland and Britain. The British Commonwealth possesses neither a constitution nor a government. Yet its nations, the Dominions, maintain peace with each other and can act in common for mutual security.

We may ultimately get a federation of mankind but we shall not get it by a single act of agreement of all the nations, but by a wise day-to-day attitude to each other that will enable us to evolve piecemeal towards such a development; a development which can never be final, but must always be subject to change, like the political life of nations themselves.

One may go further. If at the postwar conferences there are presented a number of mutually exclusive plans, each to be fanatically defended as the sole road to peace, we shall not get peace. Neither shall we if a number of rival economic or political doctrines are to be promoted as necessary to peace. In a world of sixty or seventy nations of infinitely varying background, ways of thought, habits of life, scales of moral value, political and religious doctrine, each must be prepared to concede, to compromise, to tolerate differences, to grant to others the right to doctrines which differ from our own. If arms are to be used for the promotion of doctrines, economic or political, we shall get back to the conditions of the religious wars and the inquisitions. Passionate convictions are so often the enemy alike of truth and of peace. Willingness to accept far less than what we believe to be the perfect, that spirit of tolerance and compromise which so many "over-principled ruffians" (as a certain group of revolutionaries were once truly called) regard as craven and pusillanimous, is not a vice, but a virtue without which freedom and democracy are impossible. (If those millions of passionately convinced enemies of Roosevelt were not willing nevertheless to live under his hated leadership, America would not now be at peace.)

All of which makes one sceptical of Mr. Ziff's proposals.

For Mr. Ziff nothing will suffice but to rearrange completely the whole world from top to bottom—economically, politically, socially. But there would seem to be nobody to do it. All the present leaders—Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, Benes, Eden, de Gaulle—are summarily dismissed in one single paragraph. The chancelleries, the state departments, the foreign offices are worse; their declarations, such as the Atlantic Charter, are either swindles or futilities. Britain is on the way out, her empire in process of dissolution, likely to become World Enemy Number 1 with whom the United States should not be allied. Yet, towards the end of the book, Britain and her Dominions "and those possessions which fly the British flag" are to become part of a "Union of the West" of which the United States is to be the dominant element. And "in committing herself to union with America, Great Britain would rectify a classic blunder in history and would enter a new phase of economic prosperity and security such as she has never enjoyed before." Which would seem to give Britain, the British nations scattered over the world, their people and their statesmen, some considerable role after all. The world is to be divided into five "political aggregates" which will have to maintain peace with each other. But as the earlier part of the book was devoted so largely to proving that statesmanship everywhere is dominated by selfishness, an itch for exploitation, incompetence, and an in-

(*Continued on page* 28)

Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill at the Teheran Conference.

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The Boswell of the GI's

BRAVE MEN. By Ernie Pyle. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1944. 474 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
BRIGADIER-GENERAL DONALD ARMSTRONG

IN all the vast literature of war there is nothing quite like the books by Ernie Pyle. Among thousands of writers, he is unique because the fighting sergeants, corporals, and privates far more than the high command hold his attention. He is unmatched in his capacity to see the infinite details of the daily struggles of the men in the fox-holes against the enemy and nature. He is inimitable in his dry humor, his unassuming simplicity, his straightforward and unadorned style, and in his ability to tell a story and describe a scene. In short, he is just the right man to interpret the democratic United States Army and to write an enduring report on what he saw and heard. He does admit a few generals and colonels into the glorious company and the goodly fellowship of the "little men" of war, but strategy, logistics, and headquarters staffs are not for him. His mission is to explain the GI with sympathetic understanding and profound respect. He does it with preëminent success. No one else has bridged the gap between the fighting men at the front and the civilian population at home as Ernie Pyle has done. Soldiers admire him because of his extraordinary insight into their pro tem profession. His is the ability to tell how they fight with the multitude of weapons and the variety of tools and instruments of modern warfare, what they live through, and how some of them die.

This is exceedingly rare. If the student of history wanted to know how, in past wars, men in the ranks lived and reacted to hardship and danger in battle, and how individual soldiers fought, he would probably look in vain. Mr. Pyle has few precursors in his particular field, since nobody below a colonel ever had much chance of getting into print before. True, Mr. Pyle agrees that in this war "We have won because we have had magnificent top leadership, at home and in our Allies and with ourselves overseas. Surely America made its two perfect choices in General Eisenhower and General Bradley. They are great men—to me doubly great because they are direct and kind." But another chief reason for our victories is because our men are brave, and this bravery prevails in spite of hunger, fatigue, and all the enemy's arsenal of weapons and his long years of professional militarism.

This is how the historian of the GIs sums up his purpose in writing this book: "I just sort of tried to write what the war was like, and didn't even especially look for hero stories, since there were so many guys who were heroes without there being any stories to it." And so in a war in which machines were thought by many to dominate the battlefield, the human being is still more important than tanks and guns and, to make that truth known to his readers, we can depend on Mr. Pyle. Repeatedly his interest in the little men, the confidence and affection these men felt for him, in short, the "common touch," recalled Lincoln's similar ability and attitude. Therefore, when Mr. Pyle wrote facetiously, during the fighting on the Anzio beachhead, "I haven't enough Abe Lincoln in me to do my work in candlelight," it is evident that Ernie Pyle doesn't know himself as well as he knows the American soldier. For he has a compassionate comprehension of the American soldier and an appreciation of the emotional and mental reactions of the men in the ranks that only a man very like Lincoln could possess.

This time Mr. Pyle becomes temporarily amphibious. He joined the Navy for a few days on the voyage to Sicily, but he didn't linger because the fighting on land grew so hot that he "hopped an assault barge and went ashore there on the south coast about six hours after our first assault troops had landed." That's typical of Ernie Pyle. The Navy can only regret that he didn't stay longer, for his literary contribution on life and fighting aboard ship is of the same high quality as his report on the Army.

If armed force can provide a panacea for the apparently incurable Teutonic lust for war, it will surely be supplied by the American armies that Mr. Pyle accompanied in their victorious advances. From the beaches of Sicily, through the mountains of Italy, and into the Anzio beachhead, he traveled the road to Rome. A brief period of calm followed in England. Then the invasion of Normandy, the break through, and the triumphant entry into Paris bring to a conclusion Mr. Pyle's fruitful observation of the American soldier in action.

Everyone readily concedes that the foot soldiers bear the brunt of battle, and it is naturally they with whom Mr. Pyle prefers to be and whose exploits he loves to recount. The doughboy will never have a more enthusiastic and effective advocate than this war correspondent. Their intrepid struggle during the landing on the French beaches and in the hedgerow fighting peculiar to Normandy has not been better explained than in this book. But he overlooks none of the supporting troops. The people at home with relatives among the Engineers, Ordnance, Quartermaster, and Medical troops and those soldiers themselves will find that he has effectively described the essential role of these men.

The soldier and the layman will agree in finding this book authentic, realistic and, above all, human in its description of Americans in battle. There will be universal rejoicing in the Army and the Navy and among the people of this country that the book is the November selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Wounded Americans at a field hospital in Normandy.

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Cutting in on the Spoils of War

BASES OVERSEAS. By George Weller. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1944. 414 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT OKIN

THE broad lines of American policy in the near future seem already to be set. Fortified by the recent election the administration will presumably proceed along the lines laid down in Dumbarton Oaks. We will become part of an international combination to preserve the peace and we will have forces ready to join with the forces of other nations to fight aggressors. George Weller, *Chicago Daily News* foreign correspondent, is not much concerned with that policy.

As a geopolitician he starts with the basic assumption that there will be more wars and that the United States as a great world power will fight in them. Therefore, he proposes a unilateral system of protection for this country—a system of strategic and political bases—naval, military, and air—not on our periphery but in Europe, in Asia, and in the world oceans and seas.

A fictional Russian soldier puts it to a fictional GI like this: What does the American need?

> Your own bases for your warships in the Mediterranean, your own port and rear area facilities for your merchantmen and convoys in the Red Sea and your own flag's airfields in the vital half-moon from Brazil to the African bulge to the Gulf of Guinea across French Equatorial Africa to the Sudan. You've been forced to build and supply them in this war. The question for you is whether you want to throw them away as part of getting ready for the next war. . . . Don't you know you need political bases in peace as well as fighting bases in war?

Mr. Weller, "in terms of the judgment of a single citizen," proposes ten to twelve naval and air bases of the Singapore-Pearl Harbor type, twenty-five lighter and peripheral bases of Malta's size, and a number of subsidiary landing fields. They would be scattered in Greenland, Iceland, the Skagerrak, Spain, the Balearics, Corsica, Sardinia, North Africa, the Aegean, the Adriatic, Africa, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, Burma, China, and the Pacific.

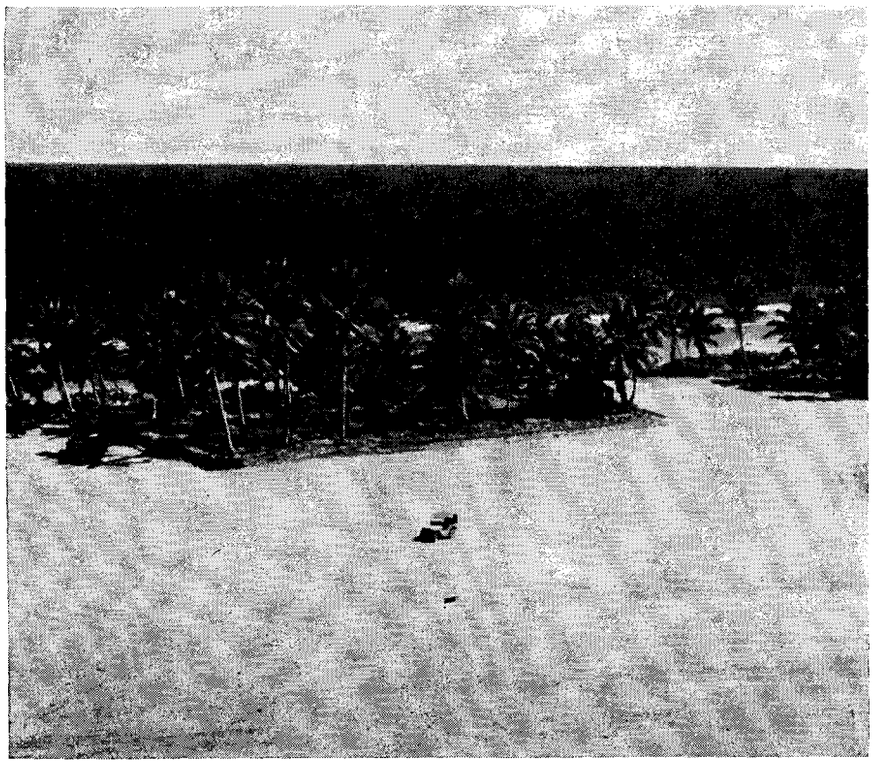
How would we get these bases? Mr. Weller answers this way:

> It is not suggested here that a great program of overseas bases should be drawn up in the United States to be imposed in total form by force on allies and enemies without consultation of their interests. . . . Two programs of bases actually exist, a maximum and a minimum. . . .
>
> The minimum program comprehends those bases which satisfy America's (a) historical titles, including her share in the ex-German mandates; (b) strategic and political commitments as demonstrated in the twin wars.
>
> This minimum gathering of overseas bases should be put into being—rather, retained in being, inasmuch as most of them are already or will be war bases—with the concord of America's allies if possible, without it, if necessary. This inner program of American obligation to herself should be realized first, and not allowed to wait on negotiations for the exterior or maximum program.
>
> The maximum program of bases, which looks to political guidance and the prevention of war, the assurance of stability and protection of friendly powers, and the winning of unfriendly powers should be put into effect only with the harmonious consent of the powers concerned. The consent should be obtained individually, however, not by conference but through bilateral (or possibly in some cases trilateral) agreement.

In Mr. Weller's eyes America was duped in World War I when it allowed everyone else to divide the spoils and through Wilson's idealism refused to demand a share. Again, he says, we find ourselves propping up British, French, and Dutch empires which cannot hold together without U. S. help. We are spending irreplaceable products of our soil in lease-lend without return. Now we should strike out for ourselves, have our own bases ready to prevent the next war. That should be our war aim, not the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter. Let the sacrifices of American fighting men bring the nation tangible, territorial gain.

Mr. Weller lays himself open to the same charges of unreality he makes against the "sentimentalists" who think war can be prevented forever. Certainly we will obtain the Japanese mandates in the Pacific. We have already obtained the 99-year lease bases in the destroyer exchange deal. But it seems hardly likely that we will get bases in England, Spain, and Italy—for instance—under any circumstances. In Brazil alone our policy is watched by all Latin America with hot eyes. Let us go back on our promise to quit them and the Good Neighbor policy will explode in our faces. More broadly, Mr. Weller's proposal would seem to be in opposition to our announced intention of entering an international order to keep the peace, an order in which the United States would share bases with other powers. Whether, in addition to this, we should demand spoils, pursue imperialism, and muscle unilaterally into every world dispute is, to say the least, debatable.

"Bases Overseas" suffers from lack of a concise statement of the thesis and a logical development of the argument. Mr. Weller has a gift for blunt, picturesque wording but too often he rants and too often becomes long-winded and dull. However, unlike many of his colleagues, he has thought about what he has seen and he has tried to relate it with the past and the future. A provocative performance, his book deserves an audience.



American base on an atoll in the Marshall Islands.

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The Business of "Capitulation"

ARMISTICE 1918. By Harry R. Rudin. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1944. 442 pp. $5.

Reviewed by STEPHEN BONSAL

THIS book does honor to its author and to the university where the solid information and the sound views therein expressed are available to those whose minds, happily, "are plastic to receive"; it mirrors the events of the much debated year when the war was won and the lame peace initiated. It tells in restrained terms the tragic story with a wealth of documents not to be found elsewhere in a single volume. It should be made required study, not merely "reading" for all who may have anything to do with the next world settlement when it is reached. It also furnishes a most useful "refresher" course to those who, like the present writer, sat in at the meetings in Paris where the Armistice terms were shaped, and later, in Berlin, listened to the secrets of the German General Staff when the commission of the Weimar Assembly dragged from the most confidential archives the story of the collapse the Ever Victorious Army when for the first time it was confronted with troops enjoying equality of equipment. Revelations so devastating to the prestige of the Prussian Army that some hopeful souls thought they would be wiped off the record by burning down the Reichstag building where they were lodged.

In old Germany there was an old saying to the effect that "while lies have long legs the truth overtakes them at last," and I am in that minority who believes that the "dagger in the back" legend was more widely accepted abroad than in Germany. During my two visits to the defeated Vaterland in 1919, I met with no one who did not know and admit that, while they fought stoutly against great odds, in the end the best German divisions cracked, many mutinied (the Imperial Navy had set this example as early as 1917), and that, in October, 1918, forty thousand of the unbeatable host fled across the Dutch border and were interned. I do not think Professor Rudin stresses the fact sufficiently that the German authorities paid no attention to the Fourteen Points, or treated them with sneers until Hindenburg and Ludendorff, and Crown Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria, and indeed all the great captains admitted in official reports that their troops would fight no more. Nor does he mention the responsibility of Allied diplomacy in making Hitler's emergence possible by failing to insist on the fulfillment of the Armistice terms which were flouted before the ink was dry. This statement, while true, is an over-simplification of the situation. By the time these breaches of faith became notorious the allied leaders had belatedly acquired the knowledge that there were groups in Germany who were less worthy of trust than the majority of the men of the Weimar Government.

Recognizing, as I do, the great merit of this invaluable book with its wealth of authentic documents all marshalled with fairness and objectivity, I do not think they tell the whole story. The atmosphere, the "climate," in which they were fashioned has to be carefully weighed. I still cling to the precept which Clemenceau sought to inculcate in the minds of those who sat at the feet of this wise old man at the Peace Conference. "Beware of documents," he exhorted, "they are the traps and the pitfalls which cunning men have placed in the path of the future historian."

Professor Rudin has with great selective intelligence escaped most of these pitfalls and yet I do not think that the duplicity of General Ludendorff emerges as clearly as it should. Once he had "hooked" Prince Max, the new and inexperienced Chancellor, into making his reluctant request for armistice terms, and so saving the battered remnants of his armies "to fight another day," the whole concern of the no longer victorious General was to place the blame (indeed, the guilt, as he called it) of the "collapse" upon the shoulders of the unfortunate civilian population that had furnished the cannon fodder. After he had transferred responsibility for the disaster to men who were wholly innocent of all responsibility for the Imperial aggressions, and had safeguarded enough men to furnish drill masters for future wars, Ludendorff fled to Sweden and washed his hands, or tried to, of the disagreeable business of capitulation.

In this fine sentence, however, Professor Rudin unmasks the mountebank, no longer wearing the Kaiser's coat and seeking to avoid the assisination which lowered on the footsteps of so many who were involved in the catastrophe.

> Nothing can eliminate these facts from history [he says]. Ludendorff was the first to insist upon an armismistice and that he forced this decision upon a civilian government which opposed it and wanted to keep on fighting; and that later he sought to make others responsible for the consequences of his own acts.

History, we are told, never repeats itself, but there are analogies which it would be well to bear in mind when the day of settlement dawns. Ludendorff did not overlook the matter of stage dressing or of costume; when His Grand Ducal Highness Prince Max was forced to present his plea for peace to the Reichstag he was not allowed to wear the uniform which he always wore day and night too, some say. No, Prince Max appeared in civilian attire. The first Chancellor who ever appeared before the Reichstag so disguised! And so the legend was launched that this was a civilian peace and that the army was not accountable for it. A bit of camouflage which, while he may attempt it, Dr. Goebbels could not improve upon.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 75

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle.

IF YOU ARE STUCK: *The clue below the cryptogram will give you the definition of one word. Answer to No. 75 will be found in the next issue.*

KBFCPBA AGMBM KGA
PVZLFKCPM MDAFKJ EAGT
CPB MHNFWW, KGA FM Z
PFJP-MDFAFCBO LPFWO
RGAK GE Z RGKOSGTZK.

—CPBGJKFM. —BWBJFBM.

CLUE: The twelfth word: FULL OF LIFE AND VITAL ENERGY.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 74

LOQUACIOUS PEOPLE SELDOM HAVE MUCH SENSE.
—BALTASAR GRACIAN.
—THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM.

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Wilson, the Family Man

MY AUNT LOUISA AND WOODROW WILSON. By Margaret Axson Elliott. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1944. 302 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH K. P. STOKES

CHRISTMAS at the White House, 1917: "On Christmas morning Edith distributed the presents. Among them was a new silk hat for Woodrow from Edith. 'Ha!' he said, setting it on his head at a jaunty angle . . ."

Margaret Axson Elliott writes this. She was the first Mrs. Wilson's youngest sister who lived with the President and Mrs. Wilson at Princeton, and was in and out of the family circle for many years. Aunt Louisa, Mrs. Wilson's aunt, and friend of Woodrow Wilson's family, was the staunch and severe Covenanter down South who brought up Margaret, and was a beloved standby of the family notwithstanding her Puritan austerity.

"Setting it on his head at a jaunty angle!" Patterns in public lives emerge and disappear, the strongest pattern eliminating the weakest—and who can not believe that the Woodrow Wilson with his silk hat at an angle, the Woodrow who "always played the lead" in the family stunt parties, finally was forced to become the sombre underling in the Woodrow Wilson of wartime? I see him, as thousands saw him, in Washington, returning from his trip to Paris with the unapproved text of the League of Nations. It was late at night. The plaza around the station was filled with a silent mass of people in a worshipful frame of mind. They were waiting for the arrival of the man who embodied more of their personal hopes and vague ambitions for a better world than any other being except their God. From the station portico came a large open car. The President was sitting up rigidly, heavily wrapped. Mrs. Wilson was beside him, in furs. Neither smiled. Nor looked around. Nor gazed at each other. There was the faintest expression of recognition on the face of the President and a lifting of the hat as from another head, not his. The homecoming was dull and as cool as the night. The crowd disappeared. Again something priceless was passed over. What correspondents would have given to have seen the President put his silk hat on "at a jaunty angle," and give back to the crowd some of the warmth extended to him! The contrast between the fellow-feeling of Franklin Roosevelt, his wave of the arm; his inclusive smile; his "fireside" voice, and the shyness and Scottish aloofness of Woodrow Wilson is striking. And it is about time for such a book as Mrs. Elliott ably writes. Now that what Woodrow Wilson thought was his failure in convincing the American people of the need for world association for peace more and more appears to have been a success that will last through ages as a goal for mankind, it is well that we know him as human as he was.

Mrs. Elliott begins with her childhood with Aunt Louisa in "Illyria," her name for the composite town of the South of her time. She describes the homely Southern life there and Woodrow's visits to "Elly Lou," who later preferred to be called Ellen; she follows with accounts of daily happenings at Princeton, and sets us right about this more personal side of the man before he hardened himself for the fight.

The chains began to tighten at Princeton, as Mrs. Elliott does not omit to relate, when, as president of the university, he fought with all the uncompromising spirit that brought him to such tragedy in Washington, for democratic reforms in the life and ideals of the university. He believed that his power of argument and persuasion could raise men to the level of idealism on which he lived. He so believed in himself that he himself wore down this most engaging side which Mrs. Elliott describes.

Was the resulting austerity forced upon him by an ungrateful country? Or by his powerful mind off guard being unwilling to concede the political simplicity of man? Ray Stannard Baker in his official biography writes: "He was always expecting human beings to act upon the highest motives—and for public rather than for private ends. It was one of the great elements of his power as a leader—as it was of his weakness!" Today, a whole generation of young people know American politics only in one word, Franklin D. Roosevelt. For thousands of soldiers over seas, voting in this Presidential election meant F.D.R. That was all they knew. They had had neither time nor resources for further study. To the last generation Woodrow Wilson meant ideals, league of nations, failure, severity, ill health, stubbornness, tragedy.

Those years have passed and after them has come the introduction in the general conception of Wilson of the word "prophet" and "man-of-family." Memories of what Wilson said would happen now have come home to the crossroads. So Mrs. Elliott in her story of her childhood with Aunt Louisa and Woodrow and Elly Lou is riding with the tide. Her book is interesting reading.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

AS THE CURTAIN FALLS

The stage directions given below are taken from the very end of ten well-known plays, after the last speech has been given and before the curtain falls. How many of the plays can you identify? Allowing five points for the title and another five for the author, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers on page 20.

1. (*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*)

2. (*The sound of a door shutting is heard from below.*)

3. (*A sound is heard that seems to come from the sky, like a breaking harp-string, dying away mournfully. All is still again, and there is heard nothing but the strokes of the axe far away in the orchard.*)

4. (*When she has gone the possible meaning of her question startles him. The curtain hides him from us, but we may be sure that he will soon be bland again. We have a feeling, you and I, that there is nothing of* HARRY SIMS *in us.*)

5. (*The din is now terrific. Demolition bombs, gas bombs, airplanes, shrapnel, machine guns.*)

6. (*The whine of a shell rises to a shriek and bursts on the dug-out roof. The shock stabs out the candle-flame; the timber props of the door cave slowly in, sand bags fall and block the passage to the open air. There is darkness in the dug-out. Here and there the red dawn glows through the jagged holes of the open doorway. Very faintly there comes the dull rattle of machine-guns. . . .*)

7. (*All movement ceases. Seconds of somber silence pass. A rotten shingle falls from the sagging porch, and the curtain falls slowly.*)

8. (*The lights slowly come up and the whole stage is composed of massive tiers, upon which stand the entire company. The Union Jack flies over their heads as they sing "God Save the King."*)

9. (*He goes to the phone. He picks up the receiver. He prepares to speak. His face is twisted in agony. No words come from between his parched lips.* LINDA *sits watching him, a knowing smile on her face. . . .*)

10. (MARTHA *is handing* MR. WITHERSPOON *the glass of wine. As he starts to toast the ladies and lifts the glass to his lips, the curtain falls.*)

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No Paths for the Diplomats

OUR JUNGLE DIPLOMACY. By William Franklin Sands in collaboration with Joseph M. Lalley. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1944. 250 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES W. YOST

THIS book, which is essentially a thoughtful and entertaining diplomatic memoir, sacrifices much of its charm in an unfortunate effort on the part of the authors to lend it timeliness and relevancy to current events. Nine-tenths of its contents are concerned with the experiences of an American diplomat during the first decade of this century in Panama, Mexico, Guatemala, and Ecuador where he had an opportunity to observe both the very special political habits of those countries at that time and the rather crude operations of the United States in pursuance of the policies of "Dollar Diplomacy" and the "Big Stick." The remaining tenth of the book is an attempt, gaily oblivious of the passage of time and history, to relate the colorful sins of that period to the less picturesque realities of 1944.

The episodes and anecdotes with which the book abounds catch the flavor of existence in those informal days and passionate climes. Security of limb or of job, whether for dictator, soldier of fortune, or Yankee diplomat, was neither to be expected nor found, but life was various and to a young man of courage and imagination offered attractive prizes. Our diplomacy, however, moving sporadically and uneasily through these troubled waters, probably deserved the epithet which Messrs. Sands and Lalley chose for the title of their book. "A jungle," they remark, "is a place where there are no paths save those which a man cuts for himself and which close behind him with fresh growths, almost as he passes."

The United States was at that time in a phase of imperialism, not the opening phase as has so often been supposed but, in the view of Messrs. Sands and Lalley, the closing phase, for our imperial movement began with Captain John Smith and the Pilgrims and continued all the way to Manila Bay. As our authors cogently note: "The tragic thing for us and for the world is that for so many years after the imperial impulse had subsided the general drift of our foreign relationships was counter to the real cause of our historical and psychological evolution. We had set something in fierce motion, and forgotten what it was." In other words, for a brief period of years, in foreign policy our grasp exceeded our reach.

The book moves from this premise through most enlightening accounts of our diplomatic behavior in the days of T. R. and Taft to the somewhat startling conclusion that we are responsible for Japanese imperialism. "In the creation of Panama, as in the annexation of Hawaii," the authors declare, "we had offered a readymade politico-diplomatic pattern for Japanese expansion." While there are undoubtedly regrettable elements of truth in this statement, it still seems a bit far-fetched to ascribe the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere entirely to our modest example. A similar lack of proportion and balance would seem to characterize the conclusion, drawn from Mr. Sand's distressing experience thirty-five years ago when he resigned from the Foreign Service in protest against "Dollar Diplomacy," that we are still the Big Bad Wolf of the Western Hemisphere. He says: "It now appears that lend-lease is one of the most effective instruments of power politics ever devised. Thus it will be seen that the Roosevelt-Hull innovations in our Latin American diplomacy are mainly innovations of instruments." It seems unlikely that this description of the Good Neighbor Policy would find much support even among the most fiery opponents of the Administration.

The examples could be multiplied but the conclusion is clear. The authors of "Our Jungle Diplomacy" made the initial error of not deciding beforehand whether they wished to write a memoir on the olden days or a political pamphlet on the burning issues of the moment. When they stick to the former, as they do most of the time, the book is delightful and rewarding. When they stray into the latter, as they do in the first and last chapters, the result is not impressive, since their political conclusions are based on data the collection of which apparently ceased about the year 1910.

Assassin

By Hassoldt Davis

HERE are the dust and the glory, the flies
and the small curdled moon of assassins, the vomit
of heroes, the squeak of the heart for the prize
of recalling your pride and the cruellest plummet
of your strange affection which spun—in denial
of war and its urgency, love and its thirst—
to the banter of friendship, the epicene trial
of wits, last night, when you graciously nursed
my departure.

Here, I'll remember you dearly,
and all our hot mornings, and all our last night
when I poked a blind needle to mend a tent, nearly
as well as yourself might have done it. The bite
of the bitch that is war has now cloven us, shredded
the quick nerve of love, and left in your shrinking
dead heart only pity for love that is bedded
with death.

Listen, the swathe of the stinking
first reaping of conquest lies over these hills,
with the sun of our fathers who knew it in France
and spat at it. Listen, the pixie who spills
such a sun on the terrible, imbecile dance
of our bayonets; listen, the gnome who has stolen
God's thundering pulse is no gentler than you
who once threaded my needle, and you who have swollen
its thread in the deep and the dead blood of you.

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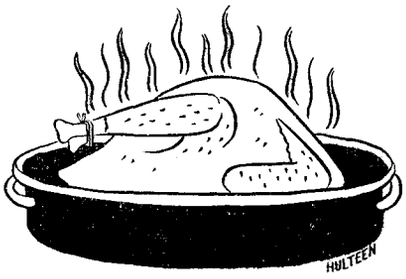
Strictly Personal...

WHITE FOLKS ARE EASY TO PLEASE

AS Dr. Overstreet pointed out in these pages some weeks ago, the rural Southern Negro is an irresistibly comic figure in the eyes of the average white American, and the more nearly he is a stereotype rather than a man the funnier he seems to become. He is, first of all, pictured as incurably lazy—an illusion which brought fame and fortune to the Negro movie actor Stepnfetchit. His days are spent on the levee sweet-tawking complaisant ladies, eating watermelon, shootin' dice, picking his guitar, moanin' his blues away, and waiting for that steamboat comin' roun' the bend. This makes him something of a champion waiter because on the whole sweep of the lower Mississippi from Cairo, Illinois, to New Orleans, a steamboat is about as hard to find as authentic Negro humor on the radio, but the customers are nonetheless satisfied. If, however, our black comedian is not waiting for the *Tennessee Belle,* making side-splitting remarks while he waits, he is being funny on the plantation, in church, or in jail. Everything about him is funny including his diet which is made up of 'possum, 'coon, 'lasses, shortenin' bread ("Mammy's gonna make yo' shortenin' bread") sweet taters, roasenen years, and a chicken that crossed the road. This man's name is Sambo, his wife is Liza, and their twin boys are called Sears and Roebuck.

Sambo is a simple, guileless, amoral creature, but for decades he has made millions of white Americans laugh and has brought fortune to minstrels, vaudevillians, playwrights, songwriters, and radio script writers. He is, moreover, a hard man to kill and is



still going strong when his comic competitors of another day have vanished and been forgotten. Pat and Mike, the funny Irishmen; Yonny Yonsen, the comic Swede; Carlo, the Wop, who worked on the Delaware Lackawan'; and Jakey, the shrewdly humorous Jew —all these who laid 'em in the aisles at the turn of the century—have long gone to their graves. But Sambo, the rural Negro, is still with us in a thousand guises and the old gags that are put in his mouth are still the best.

The situations upon which Sambo's humor is based are both stale and stock. (a) His genius for misusing words. "I signs all my checks with a inedible pencil." (b) His amorous misadventures. "Boss, I disremembers how many head o' chillun I has 'cause I been sweetheartin' roun' dis country ever since de fust time de *Belle O' The Bends* come up de river." (c) His propensity for shooting dice—a game which, with devastating humor, is usually called "African golf." (d) His irresistible attraction for chickens crossing the road. (e) His laziness. "Nawsuh, I ain't afraid of work. I jes lays down by it and goes to sleep." (f) The funny names he gives his children: Gasolina, Benzina, Rockefeller, Dewdrop. (g) His brushes with the Law in which, nine times in ten, he comes out on top. "Judge, I sho didn't steal that mule. I and him was brought up together and he follows me wherever I goes."

THE rural Negro has a humor of his own which is warm, mirthful, earthy, and lacking in sarcasm or malice, but instead one usually hears on the stage or radio old vaudeville jokes transposed and put in the mouth of Sambo (a proper name almost impossible to find among Negroes) and not in the mouth of Yonny Yonsen, Jakey, or Carlo. It is doubtful whether this humor would always carry over to whites who do not have an intimate understanding of rural Negroes, just as much of the humor of other minority groups in this country does not carry over to persons who do not intimately know their manners and customs. In Yiddish humor, for example, a stock situation is developed when one comedian says to the other: "So now you're drinking tea from a cup." The point is that newly arrived immigrant Jews drank their tea from glasses following the almost invariable custom of southeastern European lower or middle class groups. One is therefore on the rise when one begins to drink tea, in the manner of the rich and fashionable, from cups.

The difficulty of transposing humor applies not only to immigrant groups but also to what is called the old American stock. On an occasion when I visited a somewhat wild-eyed novelist at his Vermont summer home, I asked him what the villagers thought of him. They said he was all right because "he pays his bills and keeps his place up." When I related this incident to Mississippi friends they looked at me blankly because these Yankee criteria of good conduct did not carry over to them. In my region stock jokes have to do with how long it takes us to pay our bills and houses in which "it leaks outside and rains inside."

Similarly, when I have cited instances of true Negro humor to Northerners they failed to get the point but laughed when I transposed an old chestnut into dialect and gave it a plantation locale. This is perhaps one reason why one seldom hears true Negro stories on the stage or radio

while the authentic Negro story is hard to find even in the South where many persons are as pleased with synthetic Negro humor as are Northerners. Numbers of stories—dreary and mirthless—concern the Negro's amorous misadventures and nowhere is the difference between white and Negro humor more marked than in this category. The borderline story at best tends to be dull but the white man's stories in this field are almost invariably lewd and lecherous as well as dreary, and have about them something of the false bravado of the small boy scrawling naughty words on the fence. Here the Negro's humor is warm, vigorous, picturesque, and lusty, and would have been readily comprehensible to the Elizabethans.

Perhaps I can illustrate my entire thesis by one authentic Negro story—a story, that is, which in its background, development, language, and climax is as much a part of the people as the soil on which they live; a story which could not proceed from any other people or environment in this country.

Elzida Davis, a settled widder lady who ran a rooming house in Vicksburg, was arrested for shooting at a colored man who came to her door. Her landlord—Mr. Eubanks—visited her in jail, was told the circumstances of the alleged shooting, and knowing Elzida's propensity for "overtalking" gave her strict instructions to keep her mouth shut and say no more than was necessary. She swore that she would keep quiet.

Her first witness was Mr. Eubanks who said that Elzida was a noble woman of great righteousness; a pillar of the church and a good mother; a

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person who paid her rent on the dot; and one quite incapable of acting coarsely with a pistol. Other white folks testified to the same effect and then, after she had held up her right hand and had sworn to tell the truth "s'elp me Gawd," Elzida took the stand. Without the slightest prompting from anybody she launched into a nonstop flight of oratory and narrative:

"Judge, I aims to tell you the truth an' nothin' but the truth an' if I don't I hopes Gawd will strike me dead right heah in this chair where I'm settin.' Everybody in Vicksburg knows I'm a pore widder lady that works hard an' stays out of devilment, an' if you ask Mr. Eubanks what's out yonder in de cote-room wid the other white folks, he'll tell you I haven't missed nair Sadday paying my rent the six years I been livin' in his house. I'm a pore widder lady wid five head o' chillun but I keeps shoes on they feets and vittles in they stomach and don't ask no help from the Red Cross lady or nobody else, an' any of the white folks in town will tell you I'm a hard-workin' woman that don't do no deadbeatin', an' if that ain't the truth I hopes Gawd will strike me dead right here in this chair. But, Judge, you knows its wrong to cheat a pore widder woman like that no-'count deadbeat done what come to my house, rented my bes' room, used up might' nigh all my wood an' kindling, then run off 'thout payin' me a cent of rent. So I was settin' there studdin' how could I get my rent money when it come to me he had lef' his trunk and maybe it was something in it would he'p pay the rent.

"Well suh, I opened that trunk but it wa'nt nothin' in it 'cept some trashy ole newspapers and a pistol. I picked it up and set there in a chair studdin' over in my second mind how could I hide it where the chillun wouldn't get a-holt of it and hurt theyself, when they come a knockin' an' a poundin' at de front do'.

"It was a terrible knockin' an' poundin' so I hollers out, I says: 'Stop dat knockin' an' poundin'.' He kep' it up so I hollers again, I say: 'Stop dat knockin' an' poundin'. You breakin' down de white folks' do'.' But dat man didn't pay me no mind, so I gits up to keep him from breakin' down de white folks' do', an' 'fo Gawd, Judge, when I opened that do' that pistol jes went off right in my face."

Mississippi police court judges, gallant in any event toward ladies in distress and having a wide experience of miraculous manifestations among Negroes who come before them, are not inclined to ask too much of flesh and blood. The judge therefore dismissed Elzida who with queenly majesty stalked out into the street where Henry, her gentleman friend who drays on the town, was waiting with his lopsided wagon to take her home. There she was met by her landlord, Mr. Eubanks.

"Elzida," he said sternly, "we had a hard time keeping you out of jail today. Now don't you ever let me hear of you again taking your pistol and shooting at anybody because Judge Hawkins told me the next time you shoot at anybody he's going to bury you under the jail."

"Nawsuh," replied Elzida demurely, "I'm ain't. Next time one of them no-'count deadbeats don't pay me my rent, I'm gonna get me fifteen cents wuth o' cocaine an' a dime's wuth o' gin an' take my razor an' cut his head off."

Pleased that she had been vindicated by the law, sure that she had found a way of circumventing it in the future, and knowing that her prestige had been enhanced in the community, Elzida mounted serenely to the rickety seat of the wagon. "Giddap, mule," said Henry, and the wagon rolled slowly downhill carrying the honest widder lady to her home and her five head o' chillun back of the Vicksburg National Park.

DAVID L. COHN.

Pierre Mason, Conscientious Objector

BEHOLD TROUBLE. By Granville Hicks. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1944. 340 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

IN times of peace the philosophical position of the conscientious objector seems, to many, to possess ethical clarity, and even a good deal of political truth. In wartime it is another matter; there is a pressing necessity that fills the air and makes a dispassionate consideration of this kind of impersonal conscience almost impossible. Mr. Hicks's book seems, at first, to be making this impossible effort. It concerns Pierre Mason, a conscientious objector in the small town of Hanover, N. Y., whose refusal to accept induction brings him into focal conflict with the town. But almost as soon as this situation develops, in the first few pages, something else is developing along with it—Mr. Hicks's own uncertainty as to how thoroughly he intends to consider the problem.

For let us consider what conscientious objection must mean by definition: a refusal to deal in purposeful destruction of life. "I will not bear arms," says Pierre Mason to the draft board, and, later to his uncle, "I refuse to take life." But when the matter comes to a head and he is threatened with detention in a camp, Pierre is shouting, "If they want me, they'll have to come and get me and they'd better come with guns. . . . I'd just as soon shoot a few of the bastards around here as shoot Japs. . . ." This is a radical shifting of ground, it seems to me, from genuine conscientious objection to a very violent and murderous objection, no longer an objection to killing but now specifically an objection to being told where to go to do it. Mason believes enough in his own integrity to kill his townsmen for it, although he does not, on the evidence given here, believe enough in the integrity of the people of China or Spain or Czechoslovakia to help them kill their oppressors.

—Drawing by Marcel Maurel
Granville Hicks

This is an inconsistency which destroys the validity of his position—and it is hard to escape the conviction that Mr. Hicks has so destroyed it out of his displeasure with Mason's blindness. For whether or not Mason understands the necessities of the world in which he lives, it is true that he might have been presented with more logical consistency, that he might have gone quietly, as many objectors have, to the government camp, unwilling to kill anybody, even his own countrymen. Then Mr. Hicks would have been faced with the problem he has evaded: to explain this conscience and either defend or reject it upon reasonable grounds. Instead, he has Mason hide away in a cavern, armed with gun and shells, and have it out with a posse in a rousing shooting finale, killing two and wounding two before he is himself killed. Yet despite this mounting weight of action "Behold Trouble" remains a novel of ideas, and fails because its central idea has not been examined with dispassion or thoroughness.

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THE NEXT STEP

ALL we know about the V-2 is what we read in the papers. We have never seen it and hope we never will. But writers and historians ought to make it their business to find out as much about it as they can; because the rocket bombs have revolutionized the world even more than the kite-like contraption that the Wright Brothers managed to put into the air forty-one years ago. We need speculate no longer about the scientific horrors that might be let loose in the next war, with their capacity to consume the planet itself. Those scientific horrors are already here; though they have come too late in this war to change the outcome, they have changed —more than changed, smashed—ways in which men will live and work and govern themselves. Hereafter, every act, every word, spoken or written, every idea, will be under the shadow of a potential trajectory of obliteration.

Melodramatic? Sensational? Perhaps, but the fact is that the words have yet to be invented which can hit hard enough to drive through some idea of the towering reality of the V-2 and its inevitable offspring, or, for that matter, the real meaning of our time. The calendar itself is hopelessly out-of-date. For each year since the war began, measure out a century or more of change; the calendar mocks us with its leisurely regularity, but time these days is computed in terms of a man-made world of dynamite and steel. The gap between this man-made world and the natural world keeps getting wider all the time. So big is this gap, so incomprehensible its reality, that we think we can cope with it merely through mental stoppage, affecting a pose of sober, unhurried judgment, and chiding as war nerves or jitters all talk of fantastic new weapons that hold a potential for extinguishing all life, as we have come to know it.

Let us see just how prosaic this rocket bomb gadget actually is. It is nice and quiet, but that is not entirely in its favor, since it travels faster than sound and has done its work before it can be heard. According to the account of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's report to Parliament, the V-2 generates a speed of 3,500 miles an hour, its arc extending seventy miles into the stratosphere. It is about fifty feet long, with a couple of thousand pounds of TNT in its nose, and a fuel capacity of some nine tons. It is shot into the air from concrete launching ramps, soon attaining a velocity of 5,000 feet per second. Its range so far has been limited, mechanically or otherwise, to under a thousand miles, or some fifteen minutes. But the important thing is that the principle has been established, and all the genius and ingenuity that can be mobilized are being lavished on the attempt to make the thing go as far as may be desired. It would require only an hour and a half to complete a non-stop journey to Chicago. We say this not in irony, but as a matter of simple arithmetic.

Does anyone now question that the world of tomorrow will have a loaded pistol constantly at the back of its head? Perhaps this gun will shake us out of our moderate position about international organization. The middle-of-the-road holds such an irresistible allure that we may try to fabricate one out of sheer habit, even though it may lead us away from the objective itself. Isolation as a national issue is practically dead, but there is a real and deep cleavage on the issue of how far we ought to go in the direction of international organization. We still think that we need nothing more than a revivified and strengthened League of Nations, that American participation in such a League will serve to correct all the old faults. Any League is much better than no League, of course; and the inclusion of America will give it a much better chance than it had before. But, all we are doing here is learning the lessons of 1919 but not the lessons of 1944. To the extent that science—especially destructive science—has compressed the world, to that extent must world organization keep peace. A world that is in a thimble scientifically is a cause which is as yet without appropriate effect. When you devise a bomb whose arc encompasses all the peoples of the earth with a supreme impartiality, the only way to control it is through an authority that is equally far-reaching.

The robomb is only one more argument—though somewhat more dramatic than the others—calling for a world state, with all that that implies. But we have erected such an immaculate sanctuary around the word sovereignty, investing it with such a supreme holiness, that we may lose the coming peace and our sovereignty, too, by depending on an illusion to protect our future. There is no more real sovereignty in the world, excepting the common one. Squeamish and reticent as we may be when confronted with terms such as world state and world citizenship, we shall have to get used to talking about them openly and without apology.

The next step is not only the big step. It is the only step. N. C.

Boy in Modelling Class

(NIGHT SCHOOL)

By Bridget Dryden

OH form, oh loveliness, Aphrodite born
again—my lumpy clay is full of needles—
her body is a sigh, a laugh that wheedles
the very heart from you—the armature, don't scorn
that steel beginning of it all. Don't scamp, don't hurry.
The leaden compo bends, I've done it wrong,
and all the while her body is a song
of rippling hill and hollow. I chalked upon the wall
her lovely measurements that I must follow.

How the wind rattles, damn that hissing steam,
But shut it off? Damnation, even now she shivers,
there in her nudeness—*Ah, I've caught the dream,*
the rhythm that she makes, the tool, the tool delivers
from my rude lump of clay that glow, that form
my mind's eye held—give me five minutes more
and—what's the matter? what was that, the bell?
It's ten o'clock, you guys!—Can't be.—It is.
Hell's bells, at Zero hour—Attack! Geewhiz.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

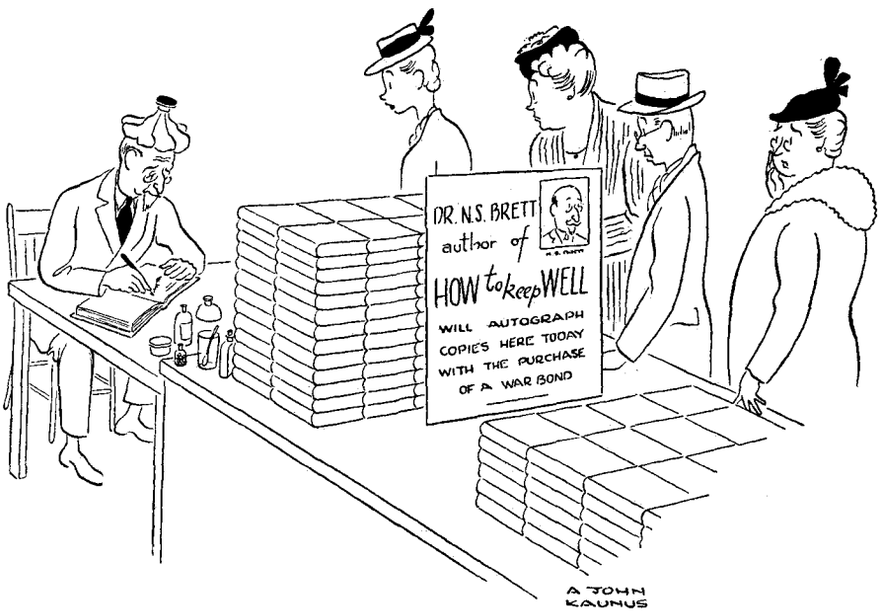
From Superman to Spinoza

SIR: Some months ago you asked about servicemen's reactions to the Armed Forces Editions. I have long wanted to write you saying these well-selected books hit the literary spot in a most satisfying way. Tonight I feel wrought up enough to add something to this. We down under the Equator, and by "we" I mean at least 50 men within stonethrow of my tent, are grateful to such magazines as yours for encouraging these Armed Forces Editions. I, too, am pleased that through your efforts we are at last permitted to read about that dangerously unAmerican jurist, Mr. Justice Holmes. I was pleasured to share with E. B. White his Maine experiences despite the dangerously political reflections he made on Daniel Webster's health.

As an indication that intellectual curiosity is far from dead in many an Army company, I want to tell you about the Modern Library books which this morning appeared miraculously from the mysterious maw of Quartermaster. For 5 shillings the PX sold with rapidity and gusto, volumes of Santayana, Spinoza, Confucius, Bertrand Russell, and Plato. Our PX does not happen to carry Superman this season, but some of us will trade him for Spinoza. Don't misunderstand me. I am not saying every soldier in a slit trench is discussing the Categorical Imperative, but, believe it or not, some may be. True, we have many more Superman readers and I am glad to relieve Guinea gloom by lively sorties with that latter day hero, though usually I prefer the humors of Bugs Bunny. What I mean is that I resent the tone of many U. S. periodicals which let their writers imply that all "GI Joe" wants to read is Superman.

As for that term "GI Joe," I don't like it because in modern slang a "Joe" is a jerk, and we aren't all that. I have never met GI Joe in my company street but I have met former professors, scientists, musicians, and actors. GI Joe is a military fiction created by slick advertising men to sell more toothpaste or train travel. Why do the advertising columns lead civilians to believe we are a bunch of martyrs, homesick yearners, and worse?

Pardon my verbosity, but though this is not a new point, it cannot be too often emphasized. Since you are good friends to brains in the Army I am sure you'll not be surprised to know that any noon I can see men escaping the glare of New Guinea through reading Joyce, James, Melville, Forster, and a host of others. Your writers never condescend to the "little people" as so many journalists do. Who are these "little people" I hear so much about? If I am one, I can tell you I certainly don't feel little.



Please convey a personal message to Elizabeth Kingsley. Four friends and I often curse her mildly when inextricably entangled with some Mixo-Lydian deity, but are really fond of her. I'll go so far as to say I have a distinct intellectual crush on Mrs. K.

One anecdote and I'm done. Today "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard" sold well. Some soldiers are not like the Army librarian who shelved that book under Crime, next to "Who Killed Aunt Maggie?" I wonder at times if anyone killed that librarian. Praise be all Army librarians are not like that. And I know—I'm engaged to one.

Sincerely, if verbosely,
(T/S) KEITH W. CHALMERS.
33344782,
38 Inf. Div. Band, APO 38,
c/o PM, San Francisco, Cal.

"The Veteran Comes Back"

SIR: In Dixon Wecter's review of "The Veteran Comes Back" in your issue of September 16, 1944, there is the following statement: "He (the veteran) is offered more schooling at Federal cost, unemployment insurance, *and a loan to help him buy a home or enter business.*"

This would give the reader the idea that the Federal Government offers the veteran a loan under the terms of the "G. I. Bill," (the Act of June 22, 1944). The government, through the Veterans Administration, only guarantees the loan, up to fifty percentum of the total loan and not in excess of $2,000. The veteran obtains his loan in the usual manner by establishing character and security with a bank or other recognized lending institution. The government makes no loans to veterans under this law.

It is also mentioned that dependents of the Mexican War of 1846 are still on the pension rolls. Not only this, but we still have a dependent (daughter) of a veteran of the War of 1812 on the rolls, Esther Ann Hill Morgan, Independence, Oregon, daughter of John Hill, Private in the New York Militia in the war that ended *one hundred and twenty-nine years ago.*

J. P. CULLEN.
Area Office No. 6
610 S. Canal Street
Chicago 7, Ill.

Van Loon Letters Wanted

SIR: People are continually asking me, "When are you going to publish a collection of your husband's letters?"

I intend to publish a collection of his letters as soon as I can get one together. Unfortunately—or rather, I should say fortunately—we were together so much of the time that I personally have very few letters from him. And so I am making this appeal to all the many friends of Henrik Willem van Loon who have received and kept letters from him, to lend them to me for the purposes of this book.

Please send them, or copies of them, to me at my home, Nieuw Verre, Old Greenwich, Connecticut.

I will take great care of them and return them all as soon as possible to the owners.

HELEN VAN LOON.
Old Greenwich, Conn.

Cassandra Still Right

SIR: Doesn't the election and its assorted varieties of bad taste make the following appropriate?

Cassandra, you were right, who spoke unheeded
Through all your fruitless, bitter range.
But though new men are here, and you are needed,
Remain in peace. Men do not change.

PAUL S. GRANT.
University Club of Milwaukee.

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TRADE Winds

"THE CUSTOMERS ALWAYS WRITE."

From Dixon Wecter, author of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home":

Your recent story about Dr. Hull and the traffic cop recalls an incident of my New Haven days, circa 1927. It concerns the rector of the highest Episcopal Church in New Haven, Dr. William Osborn Baker (who preferred to be called Father Baker, and always faithfully wore his clerical collar). He was a friend of mine. On the twentieth anniversary of his rectorship, his parishioners presented him with a shining new Packard, supplanting a bony old Dodge in which he had been making his visits and sick calls for over ten years. Driving down to Manhattan in this handsome new machine, Father Baker found himself exhilarated and perhaps a little confused. Suddenly discovering that he was going in the wrong direction on a one-way street, he tried to extricate himself by making an illegal turn, and through a red light. A burly policeman then appeared and with a bow waved him to the curb. Leaning on the door, he said gently: "Father, I'm afraid you're breaking about five traffic rules at once. Of course it's O. K. by me. But I better warn you, Father, that the cop on the next beat is a Baptist."

Ralph Lewis Moran, of Business Biographies, supplements Fred Melcher's revelations on the banana industry:

Just to keep the record straight: bananas were being grown in the United States in 1845; this being "in the green-houses near Mobile, Alabama."

What was probably the first importation of this fruit was in 1804 on the schooner *Reynard;* they were brought up here from Cuba.

Carl August Franc organized a company to import the banana from Colon some time before 1870.

If the proper edition of the "Arabian Nights" is read there is also some interesting information on the banana.

Confronted with Mr. Moran's letter, Fred Melcher, who was munching an apple at the time, dashed off the following reply:

I am very glad to have the added information about the history of the banana. I am sorry not to have at hand the full text of "Arabian Nights" so that I could read it carefully for the further reference mentioned.

When and if Wellfleet has its highly proper celebration on the beginning of the banana industry, I will suggest to them that they mention that bananas were grown "in the greenhouses near Mobile in 1845" and that some were imported to a port not mentioned on the schooner *Reynard* in 1804, etc.

The story as you told it about the development of the banana industry to its present $50,000,000 status is thus given an interesting preface but is not changed in its significance. It still seems to be clear that Captain Baker saw the importance of commerce in bananas and that American picnic baskets have had more diversified contents and metropolitan sidewalks have taken on a more hazardous character because of the developments that led directly out of the sailing home of the good ship *Adventure* with a cargo of bananas.

For further details and confirmation of the accepted accuracy of your report, see the highly authoritative "Dictionary of American Biography," Volume One.

From Dodd, Mead, publishers of Bernard Shaw's new "Everybody's Political What's What":

In your recent collection of anecdotes about Mr. Shaw, you overlooked a good one that was just reprinted in the *Pulpit Digest.* A distinguished writer visited Shaw and expressed surprise that there wasn't a single vase of flowers in evidence in his Whitehall apartment. "I thought you were so fond of flowers," he remarked.

"I am," returned Shaw abruptly. "I'm very fond of children too. But I don't cut off their heads and stick them in pots about the house!"

Mr. David Stern, of Elkins Park, who used to sign his contributions to F.P.A. "N. D. Plume," needs a little heart-to-heart talk on current paper and transportation problems. The evidence:

I'm an inveterate *SRL*-er.
I read it through from top to cellar.

To win my praise is as easy, maybe,
As taking Canby from a baby.
I never fumble a chance to tout it,
And scorn the people who do without it!
So listen, please, to this gripe of mine yet,
(With a bow to Samuel Hoffenstein, yet).
A book is reviewed—it's a minor item
Devoid of glamor for those who write 'em—
Which rather appeals to your reading diet,
So out you go and you *try* to buy it.
Well, friends, right here is where you get blocked yet;
The bookseller tells you it isn't stocked yet.
And then he hands you that old elixir:
"I'll order it for you—come in next week, sir."
So week after week, till you feel like a boarder,
You call, but he tells you it's still on order!
What thanks do you get? Though you wish him well with it,
Could it be that the publisher thinks to hell with it?

From Mrs. Thomas MacKellar, of Wellesley:

Since you are the only publisher I really know (thanks to Trade Winds), I am writing you to ask if something can't be done about the increasing use of *dis*interested for *un*interested. Wouldn't it be possible for publishers to agree to edit that word in all their publications? Also *un*interest for *lack* of interest—whenever used with the wrong meaning? Even the best publishers—and some of the best writers—have fallen into this confusion of meanings.

Mrs. MacKellar evidently does not know that the only thing publishers have agreed on in twenty years is that their authors neither understand nor appreciate them. Her point on grammar is indubitably correct, and will be noted at Random House, at least.

From John Woodburn, of Harcourt, Brace:

Here is a story which I like especially because it is loaded. It concerns a diplomatic dinner in Washington when a young woman, the sort you might call *nouveau Russe,* turned to her dinner companion, a man from the Soviet Embassy, and began: "How *does* your magnificent army do it? It seems that every day I read in the papers that they have hurled back the Nazis another twenty miles; it's simply magnificent! How *do* they do it?" And the man from the Soviet Embassy said modestly: "I really don't know how to answer that question; unless—perhaps—it might be that the Soviet Army is the only one fighting today that isn't afraid of Communism."

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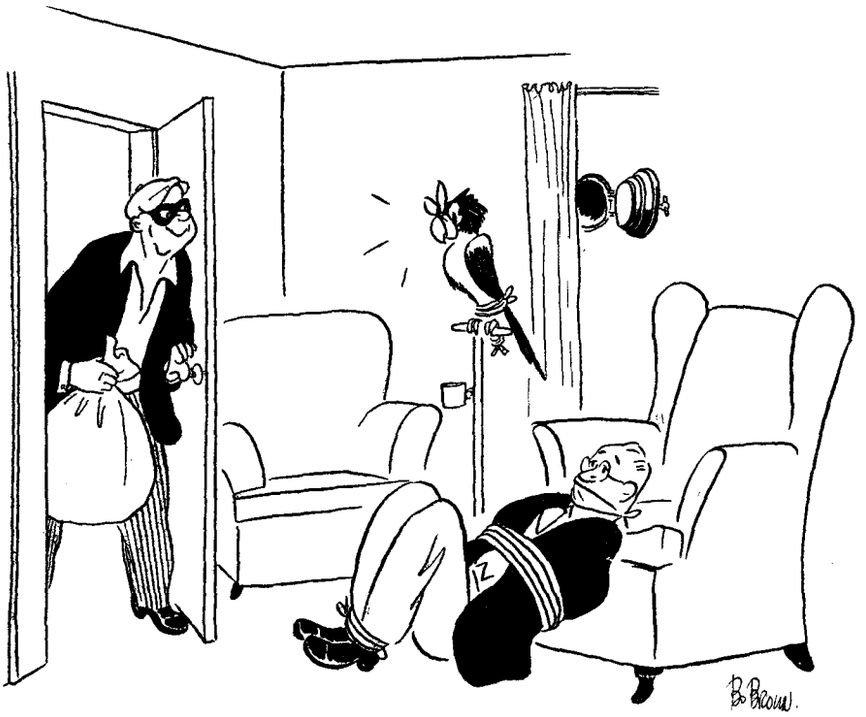

Don Quinn, script writer for the hugely successful "Fibber McGee and Molly" radio program, is in a tizzy over uncut pages:

I am getting pretty damn tired, Mr. Cerf [he writes], of propping myself up in bed for a couple hours' relaxation with an alleged good book, only to find almost immediately that the third and fourth pages are joined together in the unholy bonds of parsimony. Or if it isn't parsimony, then it's just lousy, careless publishing, and in this technically advanced year of 1944 I don't think there's the slightest excuse for it. And don't tell me there's a war on, either. Printing the things in 2-point Olde Eyestraine to save space and paper is enough to convince Colonel McCormick of that.

Picture me, Mr. Cerf, in bed; bathed, toothbrushed, clockwound and happy, just getting to the place where Michael Shayne is patting his pretty secretary on the rump for the second time. I turn the page. It's too thick. It's got a round edge. It's uncut!

With a horrid oath, I make a survey of the night table to see if there's anything handy which will serve as a paper cutter. Have you ever tried cutting pages in a book with a lamp, a handkerchief, a clock, a Philip Morris, a flashlight, a sucret, or a Charles Fort Omnibus?

Or do you keep Florentine daggers lying around on every flat surface in the joint, knowing in your trade-hardened mind all the scurvy devices of cheapskate publishers?

I've tried the Peek-a-Boo, or Block-that-Retina System, too. That's the game where you hold the pages apart with the index and probing fingers of the right hand while you peer down the resulting Tunnel of Hate. You find it looks like Gertrude Stein in the Sanskrit translation, and if you can read it, it's equivalent to a Schneider; or game, set, rubber.

Then there's the Manual-Violent, or Paper Doll method of separating the pages. This has the interesting end-product of giving you a half page on the left, and a page and a half on the right. Which gives you a bad list to starboard by the time you get to the Note On The Type In Which This Book Is Set, about which who the hell cares?

It isn't so much the fact that I'm going to have to give up reading or carry a bowie knife in my pajamas, Mr. Cerf. That I could do for the War Effort. But I had planned, when the radio business had had enough of me, to take up fore-edge painting.

Never even thought of that, did you?

If it will keep Mr. Quinn out of fore-edge painting (the field is overcrowded) I'll tell a story of a time when uncut pages saved Eugene O'Neill a lot of trouble, and possibly a lot of cash. One of those pests that always harass a successful playwright was suing him for plagiarism in "Strange Interlude." She claimed that he swiped the material from a novel which she had published privately. How did he happen to see it? She had given Copy Number Eleven to his producer, Lawrence Langner of the Theatre Guild. Mr. Langner promptly salvaged said Copy Number Eleven from the attic of his home and produced it in court. None of the pages had been cut! . . . The case was dismissed.

BENNETT CERF.

Emily Hahn

tells the full, candid story of her own life in the land of THE SOONG SISTERS

China TO Me

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

At your bookseller's $3.00

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Out of Mr. Cerf's Grabgag

TRY AND STOP ME. A Collection of Anecdotes and Stories, Mostly Humorous. Edited by Bennett Cerf. Illustrated by Carl Rose. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1944. 371 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

THE appearance of a book written by a publisher is so cluttered with significance that a reviewer hardly knows where to place the first dagger. Publishers, in the opinion of authors, are simple sellers of beads who can neither read nor write, and who keep their squaws locked up in penthouses except during sacrificial dances to the rain god. Authors, in the opinion of publishers, are people who, when faced by the alphabet, cannot resist the impulse to make fools of themselves. How these two nadirs, equipped with a natural revulsion for each other, collided and embraced in the same man, is an enigma. When, in addition, it appears that another publisher issued the book, and the publisher who wrote it says point-blank that the stuff is humorous, things have come to a pretty pass, as the man said when the lady kissed him.

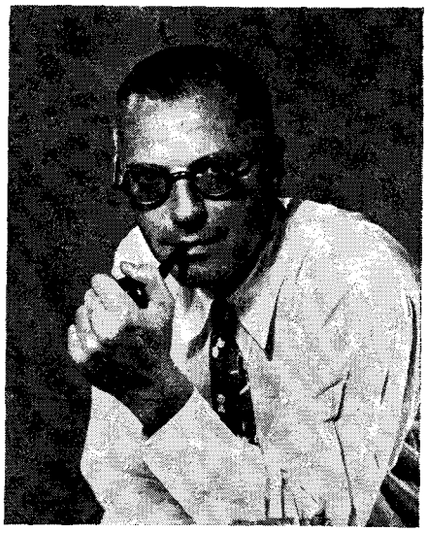
Mr. Cerf is president of Random House, and had the honor of turning down his own manuscript. A couple of fellows named Simon and Schuster, who can go along with a gag, have taken a chance on it. They should do well, and Mr. Cerf will probably make his authors come to the office at night and help him count the royalties. They can prepare themselves for the ordeal by reading the Book of Job.

Mr. Cerf's intentions are good. He wants everybody to be equipped with a set of surefire gags, mots, puns, anecdotes, jokes, and ripostes, in case Winston Churchill or Ann Sheridan drops in unexpectedly for dinner and the conversation palls while the hostess's blood is being chilled to room temperature. Things like that have been happening to him for years, and from sheer embarrassment he began clipping *The New Yorker* and writing things on his cuffs, which are made of notepaper. Now he has done us all the good turn of setting down these trivia of the comic spirit in a prose which, if not deathless, is at least alive and well. A lot of the material is old; a lot of it is dull. But an amazing proportion is lively, fresh, and funny. Trade Winds addicts will find all their old favorites here.

Mr. Cerf shows evidence of being a hypergelast, one of those persons described by George Meredith as "the excessive laughers, ever-laughing, who are as clappers of a bell, that may be rung by a breeze, a grimace; who are so loosely put together that a wink will shake them." But this may not be so. Bergson says, "Our laughter is always the laughter of a group," and points out that the man on the train who overhears a joke told in a group is not moved to laughter, though the members of the group may be in paroxysms. Therein lies the fault—and it is the only fault—in Mr. Cerf's formula. He has told too much of the humor of his own group, humor dependent for its appeal and understanding upon knowledge of the group members and intimacy with them. "You really ought to know George," he seems to be saying, "George is a card. He always has us laughing. Wait till I tell you what he said last night." But unfortunately we do not know George, and what he says, when it finally comes out through the teller's gales of laughter, seems more cruel than funny, more crude than comic.

That, of course, is the purpose of comedy—to criticize social behavior, and keep it within limitations of reason, taste, and morality. It is an appeal to intelligence, highly effective in a civilized community where men and women meet on an equal plane. But it suits itself to the group; it is, in fact, a special development of the group, aiming at the group's foibles and reversions to barbarism. Consequently, only a member of the group can understand it, and for that reason only the humorist who expands his group to include all of mankind, and who makes his jokes upon basic and perpetual flaws in the human structure (the Seven Deadly Sins, for instance) persists for long. Thus when Mr. Cerf tells of G. K. Chesterton's remark on first seeing Broadway illuminated at night—"How beautiful it would be for someone who could not read"—the group he addresses includes all Americans, and the humor of the statement will be understood as well in Meridian as in Manhattan. When he tells of the astronomer who looked through his telescope and announced that it was going to rain because his corns hurt, humanity is the group. Even an Englishman would understand that reference to the state of our civilization, torn between science and superstition, between world unity and global war.

It may also be that the humor suffers from an overdose of names. The gossip columnist always hangs a gag on someone the public knows, and Mr. Cerf has followed this example, even listing the names in an index, so that if those he mentions buy the book they can easily find themselves, and see their names twice; once in small print, just like an historical character. This will puzzle archeologists of the future, who may see in the book an excellent reflection of our state of social evolution. Most of the motion picture writers, screen actors, newspapermen, lower drawer executives, comedians, columnists, horseplayers, footpads, drunks, etc. who are mentioned will long ago have faded into the night of time. This will lead esotericists of the twenty-fifth century to an obvious conclusion—a system of metaphysics is concealed in the book. It will be studied then as carefully as the Emerald Tablet of Hermes and the Bembine Table of Isis, and Lucius Beebe, Dorothy Thompson, and Mark Twain will emerge on a brandnew set of Tarot cards. They have just the faces for it, and Carl Rose's depiction of Miss Thompson as Columbia, if it is preserved, should be an inspiration.



—*Halsman*

Bennett Cerf

Well, that should pull the authors even with the publishers for a while. Now, to be frank and fearless, the book is grand, and it ought to outsell "Forever Amber," unless we want to admit that we would rather leer than laugh. Mr. Cerf has done an excellent and a difficult job, winnowing dull wheat from bright chaff, and doing a service to posterity as well as his pals and the public. Laughter, says Bergson, is like froth on a wave.

> It indicates a slight revolt on the surface of social life. It instantly adopts the changing forms of the disturbance. It . . . is a froth with a saline base. Like froth, it sparkles. It is gaiety itself. But the philosopher who gathers a handful to taste may find that the substance is scanty, and the aftertaste bitter.

Here, then, is a first class mess of spindrift.

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CHRISTMAS BOOKS FROM Whittlesey House

A Tribute to the Spirit of All Men at Sea

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A MODERN ODYSSEY

by GEORGE SESSIONS PERRY & ISABEL LEIGHTON

¶ This is the story of the men of the stricken *Marblehead*, men who continued, in the midst of havoc, to be what they had been—same tempers, vanities, dreams, courage, same pride of brotherhood and love for the ship they manned. You will read here the story of a ship's company, as powerful, as stirring, as alive as the strong handclasp of those men themselves. *With drawings by* John J. Floherty, Jr., *Chief Specialist, U. S. Coast Guard.* $2.75

CONTINENT'S END

Edited by

JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON

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Maybe It Could Happen

BORROWED NIGHT. By Oscar Rey. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1944. 262 *pp.* $2.50.

"12:20 P. M." By William Gilmore Beymer. New York: Whittlesey House. 1944. 273 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

AS a Hungarian, Mr. Rey is not unfamiliar with German ways, and seems also to have had a certain amount of (perhaps indirect) experience himself in World War I. As demonstrated in the immortal saga of the Good Soldier Schweik, malingering tricks in army hospitals—the background and subject of Mr. Rey's tale—in that war constituted one of the characteristics of life in the rear of the slowly disintegrating multi-national Austro-Hungarian Army. There was far less of it in the German ranks. How many of these tricks are tried or carried through in the field hospitals of the Nazi Army no one knows; the perfection of medical examination methods, certainly not confined to the Allied forces, should be known to German soldiers and deter them from such large-scale attempts as depicted by Mr. Rey with a tiring wealth of details. His story, then, of an Alsatian-born conscript in the German Army who poses as a case of traumatic neurosis, is not too credible by any means. But, credibility aside, it is a mediocre yarn; staffed with all kinds of stereotyped characters (including a courageous, pretty, underground girl in nurse's uniform and a demonic Svengali), its denouement depends exclusively on the well-known smartie who knows all the answers.

Mr. Beymer's story, "12:20 P. M.," a shortened version of which was published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, has an original idea to its credit. A simple South Dakotan of Scandinavian birth succeeds in doing away with Hitler by instituting a daily prayer (hence the title) which, gradually spreading around the world, finally bears fruit. Tolerably well written in the beginning, the narrative loses what originality it has the moment its hero, a newspaperman bent on getting the "true story" of the Fuehrer's end, lands on European soil. The apocryphal "W. G. Beymer" of Mr. Beymer's book gets his story pretty soon by outwitting a high-ranking Nazi who has fled to Lisbon. But it is a cardboard Lisbon, with all the trimmings of a class B film, which that worthy seems to have gotten into, and the Nazi chieftains who fill his report are mere wax figures, though painted not without skill at times. Unlike Mr. Rey's offering, "12:20 P. M." has its moments of entertainment. Although dealing with the gruesome present—if one wants to call it that—it is escape reading of a sort. There must be countless thousands who would rejoice to see it turned into reality.

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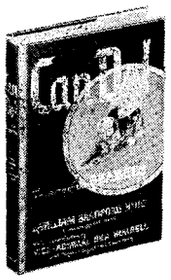

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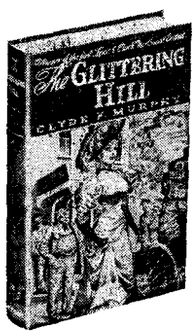

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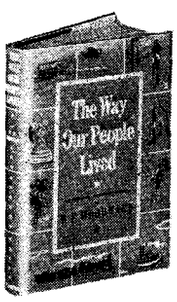

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Psychic Tower and Bare Truth

MODERATE FABLE. By Marguerite Young. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1944. 50 *pp.* $2.

BIRTH IS FAREWELL. By Dilys Bennett Laing. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1944. 53 *pp.* $1.75.

Reviewed by JOHN FREDERICK NIMS

IN the seven years since the publication of "Prismatic Ground," the poetry of Marguerite Young has not only taken a complete change of direction, it has even established itself on a higher (and a more nebulous) plane. Her earlier book was made up of graceful but perhaps excessively simple lyrics, lit by flashes of Millay and Wylie. She has since deserted these models for others more experimental and difficult. Her technique, apparently following her own inner development, has worked toward greater subtlety and complexity, longer lines, more diffused and varied rhythms. She is concerned with such weighty themes as perfection, flaw, time, probability, reality, and illusion; these she manipulates often with great originality, though sometimes with the effect of merely setting in motion wheels within wheels. Her imagery, chiefly from the regions of psychology, modern physics, and exotic ornithology, is not only glittering but functional.

Miss Young is a fine and important poet, worthy of being judged not by those standards by which we praise much contemporary verse—applying only these, one would have to speak feelingly of her achievements. Her work is strong enough to be submitted to more austere and absolute standards. By such criteria, there is a good deal that might be questioned in "Moderate Fable." It is an arduous book to read; little is direct or passionate; always the whimsy and the indirection, the delicate evasion, the escape into fancy. She works by elaboration rather than by compression. Nothing comes to terms, nothing is quite solid; everything is brilliant, shimmering, but unsubstantial, like façades of gelatin. In many ways, Miss Young is a cross between a disembodied metaphysical and a lady symbolist of the twenties.

It may be that the inadequacies of power and contact are a consequence of the highly sensitive technique which she has developed and of the attitudes which control her poems. For her work seems to come, if not from an ivory tower, at least from a psychical one, a lonely and dissolving Shalott-room from which everything is relative, illusory, and unknowable. It is not by chance that her longest poem is named for the patron philosopher of her work, Bishop Berkeley of Cloyne.

If the poetry of Dilys Bennett Laing seems to achieve its intention more fully than the poetry of Miss Young, it is because Miss Laing attempts to say less and is content to rely on techniques already brought to perfection by others. Her ideas are the emotional currency of the sensitive modern intelligence, neatly poeticized by figures that may have more validity in rhetoric than in reality, expressed in verses more trim than original. "Back Country" and "New England Scrap Heap" are excellent examples of topical verse—the items of the morning paper made pointed and lyrical. She is one of the best modern writers of magazine poetry, which, spaced elegantly between the fiction and the ads, brings to even the untrained reader the pleasure that comes from an idea or an experience made lovely by expression. It is to the credit of Miss Laing that she is able to produce this kind of verse (so full of peril for the writer) without seeming to make concessions to popular sentiment. But, although especially adroit at handling what Elizabethans called the "conceit," she tends at times to be too bare and literal: the mere statement of a truth, however noble, is not poetry. Her volume also contains a good many pieces which can only be considered finger-exercises, but there is enough of genuine worth to make it a distinguished and promising book of verse.

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Victorian Journal

THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT: The Monthly Repository, 1806-1838, Under the Editorship of Robert Aspland, W. J. Fox, R. H. Horne, and Leigh Hunt. By Francis E. Mineka. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944. 458 *pp. plus xiv.* $4.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE study of nineteenth-century thought and literature in Great Britain has been greatly enriched during the last decade by a series of careful investigations into the nature, content, and success of the serious magazines of the Victorian world. The nineteenth century was the hey-day of the serious magazine, and in these periodicals the great Victorian writers, who were as often leaders of thought as they were leaders of *belles lettres,* sometimes found their audiences. These magazines were often "conducted" by editors as brilliant and many-sided as the more famous Victorian poets and novelists, George Henry Lewes and William J. Fox being examples.

The present volume is an extensive examination of a magazine that began as an organ of Unitarian thought and continued as an organ of "radical" opinions. "Radical" was not then a smear word, but meant that one belonged to a group who brought the values of civilization under a high intellectual scrutiny they had learned from the example of Priestley and of Bentham. John Stuart Mill, who contributed important essays to *The Monthly Repository,* was a central figure in this group, who would nowadays be called intellectual communists or something of that sort, by the unthinking. But they advocated democratic reforms that have become commonplace and defended a theory of man and the state with a vigor and a culture far beyond anything American politics can show.

Mr. Mineka's study is well-written, well-balanced, and authoritative. It contains, among other matter, as good a biographical sketch of the Rev. William J. Fox as is anywhere to be found. It is a book for serious students of nineteenth-century thought, and it is unlikely that it can be displaced in its field.

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A Trio of Poets

THE COMPASS EYE. By Harold Vinal. New York: The Comet Press. 1944. 94 *pp.* $2.50.

THERE IS STILL TIME. By Carolyn Wilson Link. New York: The League to Support Poetry, 1944. 60 *pp.* $1.60.

STATEMENT. By Don Gordon. Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc. 1943. 95 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by
LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL

HAROLD VINAL is the poet of islands. In this his seventh book which is also his best and most inclusive, it is the island section, "Jupiter and Granite," where the blood runs closest to the surface and the pulse can be felt. That "flower without root," the mind, which informs the rest of the book with precise artist sincerity, with wit and sadness, allusion and astringency, has little to do with this group of poems which are themselves a chain of islands half lost in mist. As in an ever recurring dream, the poet returns in memory, in longing, to an island, returns and again departs, and comes again.

. . . Night was a spectral beach,
moonsands waited
Our keel, the woods our voices, hurt
Was sharp in the heart, ache in the breast deep
When we came to port. . . .

No one poem could encompass or end this obsessive longing, and the fourteen poems might all be parts one of another. "The Lost Island," in which Atlantis is perhaps too obviously called in as final desperate symbol, epitomizes, heightens, all:

Memory brought us here, no map, compass, ship.
But there was the waste, the waters,
Where time is no more. The island
Alone, aloof in the blue music of space.

There were no people moving, no birds,
But in that fierce instant of sudden light

We knew the island was real, and was Atlantis.
There was reef, atoll, and there in the night

The gleaming isle. In that sharp
Moment of knowledge, without need of chart,
We had found the lost, an enormous pearl that gleamed
Upon the sea's gigantic and moving heart.

Very different are the incisive lyrics in the later book: "Tree in Fog," "Anatomy," "The Poet," "Chemistry," "Flower Without Root." There is a fine group of sonnets, and eight poems on the "Death of Heroes," the boys who like those in myth and classic history are dying in the war. There is a section about people, "Masks and Faces," and one of nostalgia—universal—for "The Home Town" anywhere, or for something more elusive than a town:

To-night they are singing in Walt's place
And putting pennies in the slot machines
And drinking sarsaparilla.
Come, let us forsake this place, my friend,
And go back to the hometown.

We are freight on a strange sea here
And the destination is death.

The book is full of islands—not only the "pearl," the "opal" lying on the sea, but others: island souls, the island mind, all things irrevocably alone. Under the easy and beautiful movement of Mr. Vinal's writing, the resolving chords which sometimes seem to need no meaning but the music, lies a terrible constancy—concerning the heart of people, "Patient as though they were blind, and their lonely and trembling fingers were tracing Braille."

The League to Support Poetry has shown its usual good judgment in picking Carolyn Wilson Link's "There is Still Time." Mrs. Link's work has been seen more and more of late in magazines, good and often delighting work. She is in the certain tradition of better American women poets. Her work is somewhat akin to that of Winifred Welles although running a shorter gamut, less intense. Some similar inheritance and related viewpoint, both distinctively those of the woman long rooted on this seaboard, determine the approach—quietly cognizant, adult, but always frosted with the tingling poetic silver.

She is of an established order, as see "Sonnet of a Reactionary":

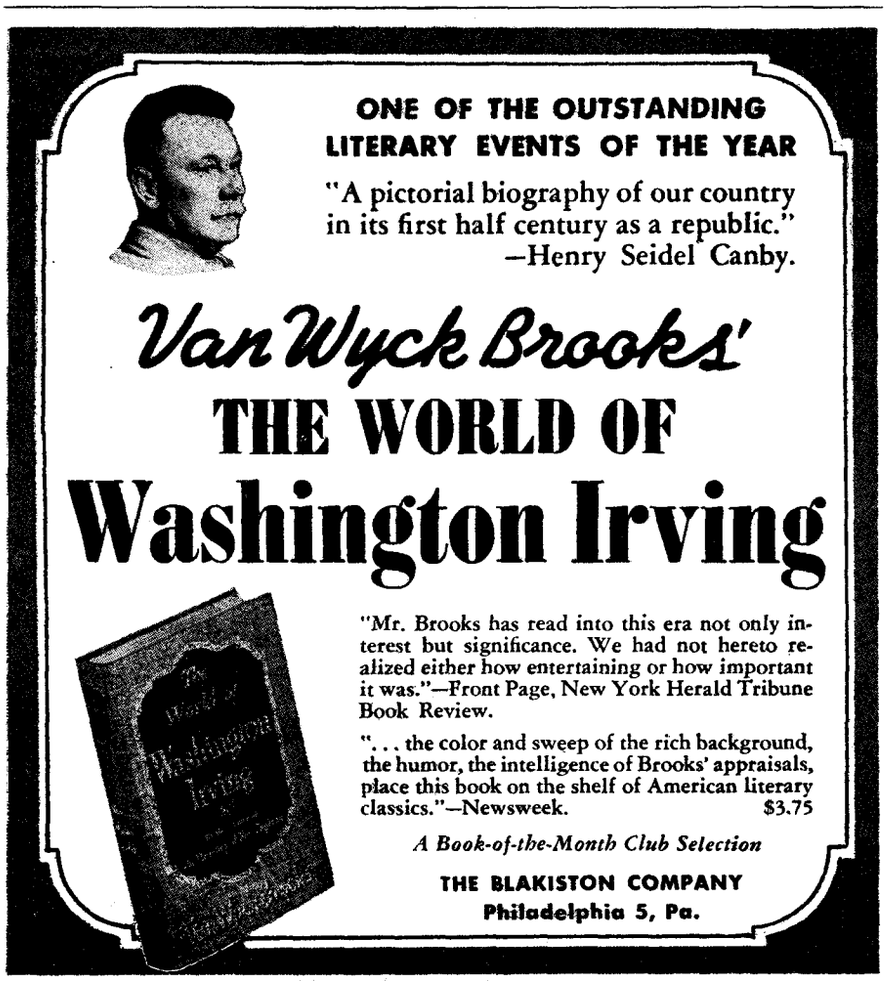
. . . There was a homesick woman
long before
Who dared to linger on the desert track,
Her breast advanced, her eyes turned briefly back.

O God of mercy and of wrath, once more
Punish with peace the obstinate, loyal fault
And sculpture my recalcitrance in salt.

It is of herself and her kind that she is writing in "For a Poet":

. . . In days of cataclysm he is the frond
That, weightless, lays its imprint in the rock.

The poems range from brief to nar-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rative. The sonnet is a favorite form, and she is able to make it as personal and fragile as a lyric. "Moonlight Swimmer," the most magical poem in the book, is on the other hand not a sonnet but resembles one—from its crystallization into something indissoluble: the luminous words making an uncuttable mesh, and casting an enchantment, of "liquid night" where

> Softened in summer air, the lambent disk
> Melts into summer water, and between,
> Pale starfish of the midnight, opaline
> Drifts the immortal form in mortal risk.

In spite of some excellent descriptive pieces of persons and places, notably "Black Boy Resting" and "Sleeping Beauty: Old New England Seaport," which probably point the way to future trends, the core of this first book is personal. Living is what the author cares about, and love in life—the same persisting and essential life which, though overlaid by war, is still one's own, and cherished, and compact of hope.

Don Gordon's book, "Statement," does not quite come clear. He is one of many who celebrate the worker, who exalt above all other kinds of work the work with hands, and who limit their talents to one too murky, too restricted field. He is by predilection better equipped than some of his fellows in that he sets his social world inside a larger, natural world, but the pattern is a somewhat dreary one—starting with the great periphery of the circle and coming down to its central point of unhappy man. He has a few passages of magnificent language, as language: "Underground 1935":

> Now imminent on earth the enemy in tunics: hussars have taken the mainlands.
> It is the lost season west of the red star but our years
> Rumble on caissons—subterrain, the single muscle, the manifold heart. . . .

But in general he is a little pretentious, even bombastic, and not lucid.

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The Epic of Leningrad

LENINGRAD. By Alexander Werth. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1944. 189 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

AT a little cosmetics shop in Leningrad a girl clerk observed to the author of this book: "You're from Moscow, I suppose. No wonder you've come here. Everybody from Moscow comes here first thing." It was something of a keynote speech. The once elegant capital of Russia was still condescending to provincial Moscow.

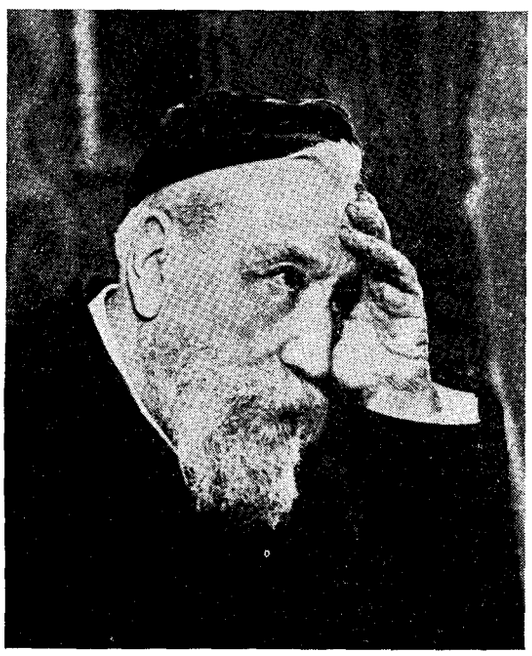
There was more than perfumery in Leningrad to tempt a visiting Muscovite. There were books, the classic and the modern authors, and book-hungry Mr. Werth bought great parcels of them. They had come from the libraries of citizens who had been evacuated, or killed in the war, or who had died during the 1941-42 famine. The plenitude of volumes was in itself a tragic symbol of the Leningrad front.

In "Leningrad" Mr. Werth, Moscow correspondent of the *London Sunday Times* and the Reuter agency, tells of his visit to his beleaguered native city in September, 1943. Son of a British mother and a Russian father, he had lived until his seventeenth year in the city that was then called St. Petersburg. The 1943 visit, his first in a quarter of a century, "cured me of much of the old nostalgic nonsense. Leningrad has become the only reality. St. Petersburg, Petrograd—that was now history and literature, and not much more."

The nostalgic nonsense, nevertheless, raises "Leningrad" high above the usual level of correspondents' books on Russia. The historical and literary charm of the former capital, personalized by the author's colorful memories, makes a remarkable setting for the wartime Leningrad that was a key-point of the Nazi-Soviet front. The Putilov foundry workers are magnificent, yes. Despite heavy all-day shelling they toil with "divine" fanaticism." But Maria Feodorovna's Anichkov Palace, now headquarters for children's "self-activity," plays a role, too, in Leningrad's defense, a role that is none the less humane for being true to a graceful past. And the ubiquitous cabbages planted by the populace bear more touching witness to civic solidarity because they are rooted in the storied Summer Garden and share with anti-aircraft guns the once formal earth of St. Isaac's Cathedral

It was the people of Leningrad who saved the "window into Europe" from the Nazis. To a man they threw themselves with suicidal desperation into its defense. Despite shelling, machine gun fire, and Stuka bombs, they dug anti-tank trenches equal in mileage to the entire Moscow-Volga canal. They worked ceaselessly in shifts, disregarding their one free day in six weeks. Even young children dug, with bruised and bloody hands. Inspired by patriotic fervor, these inexperienced workers cut twice as much timber as men Stakhanovites of peacetime days. Hundreds of thousands of women and children died of hunger, sacrificially conscious that the scant rations of food were needed by the military defenders of the city.

There is brilliant writing in this great human story, and the distinguished format of the book is worthy of it.



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Fox Hunter's Life

GONE AWAY WITH O'MALLEY. By M. O'Malley Knott with Page Cooper. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1944. 280 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
MARJORIE LA MONTE THOMPSON

THE temptations offered by biography are many and insidious, and O'Malley Knott has not been able to resist them in telling of the life he loves. It has been a good life and a full one, but it interests O'Malley more passionately than it does the average reader. One is often charmed and amused in the beginning, but it is life and not literature that he gives us, and consequently as one nears the end, one's attention is apt to wander badly. We have all experienced that slight glazing of the eye at the end of a fairly long evening of anecdote from a delightful, elderly gentleman.

Horses have been and still are the passion of O'Malley Knott's life. As a lad he grew up in the gay little Irish city of Castlebar where his father was the local doctor but kept his pair of hunters. All the talk he heard from his father's friends was of racing and riding to hounds. His own secret ambition was to be one of the greatest racing men in Ireland.

The account of his boyhood is all too brief, with its descriptions of Irish provincial life, reminiscent of the stories of Somerville and Ross. Then temporarily the sea caught O'Malley's imagination, and as an apprentice seaman he sailed from Liverpool around the Horn to San Francisco, a hundred and thirty-nine days' voyage. There he left the ship and finally got a job of sorts with a veterinarian who had a brother that had ridden in the Castlebar races. From then on the pattern of his life was set, and poverty and discouragement had no power to break it. In spite of great difficulties, he managed to put himself through the Veterinary College in New York, and to start practice in New Jersey, where he gradually aroused an interest in riding to hounds. It is the penniless lad who once walked the docks of San Francisco who has helped to found most of the great Eastern Hunts, especially the one at Millbrook for which he imported hounds from Castlebar. Horses were his destiny and he knew it.

As in any book by a fox-hunting man, there is here genuine feeling for the open country, for the beauty of mist, the sharp tang of frost in the early morning and the smell of wood smoke at night, and the joy of companionship.

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Introduction to a New Frontier

THE PACIFIC WORLD. Edited by Fairfield Osborn. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1944. 200 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT OKIN

IT may be that when the war is won this country will have many more fingers in the Pacific pie than ever before. It may be that the Japanese mandates will become American. And it may be that the future will see important American expansion westward. There has been comparatively little discussion in this country of our future course and perhaps many have not yet realized the implications of victory and of naval expansion. When this realization dawns "The Pacific World" might serve as a quick, over-all look before the plunge into the growing literature on the islands and the sea to the west.

Fairfield Osborn, president of the New York Zoölogical Society, thinks we are on the verge of a new westward movement. "When the battles are over destiny will still be calling for us there. Our soldiers and sailors who are there today will be succeeded by untold numbers of American people busying themselves in the ways of peace. It is not written otherwise." The Pacific is an area "from which we cannot turn our faces." As an introduction to this new frontier he has edited a two hundred page panorama of the sea and its lands, their history, geography, and life using the contributions of twenty-eight men representing nine American learned institutions. Its first section is general, its second regional descriptions of the islands and their groups.

As a general survey "The Pacific World" fulfils its mission but its mission is limited. It is neither an adequate popularization nor an adequate reference (and while it lists tables of facts it fails to provide a bibliography). It fails as a book with wide appeal because its style is dull and painfully reminiscent of school geography books. It fails as a reference because of its length and because it hardly goes beyond the material available in a good encyclopaedia.

Perhaps the G.I. will be interested in a quick, broad view before he digs down to the specific arena in which he will dwell and fight. I rather doubt that the style of "The Pacific World" would hold any but the most dogged. As for giving his friends and families "a clearer idea of this vast arena"—as the editor suggests—I cannot believe that this is the kind of book to which they would turn. For a writer, student, or businessman the treatment is much too broad.

In his introduction William Beebe (one of the best of the popularizers) bows to the contributions of Dorothy Lamour and "Mutiny on the Bounty" but respectfully asks the soldier to help science by making notes on natural phenomena. "There is so much we do not know about the Pacific, and what you may find out may well make some really important contribution to scientific knowledge."

POLICIES, PLANS, AND THE PUBLIC

(*Continued from page* 6)

capacity for coöperation, while peoples are still subject to race hatreds and rivalries, it is difficult to feel hopeful about so grandiose a scheme and one drawn up with such little regard for nationalist emotions and traditional ways of thought. The book is not without value as a stimulant of speculation. But for a careful and disciplined judgment of all the forces—particularly the ultimate forces which are those of the human mind—the other books mentioned above, though smaller and less pretentious, are much more valuable.

Particularly, perhaps, does this apply to "New Perspectives on Peace." Professor de Huszar's introductory paper is admirable. "The Second Chance," published by the Princeton Press, is also extremely useful. Two papers stand out: Gerhart Niemeyer's on "World Order and the Great Powers" (which includes some wholesome truths concerning both Russia and Great Britain) and Frank D. Graham's paper on "Economics and Peace." Those who accept the assumptions of geopolitics will be interested in what President Wriston has to say on that subject. Hans Kelsen's book should interest many students outside those concerned with law. Mr. Neil MacNeil has interesting things to say about the British Commonwealth and Empire; and things about Russia which need to be said.

The main impression which emerges from the reading of these books, is the conclusion already indicated, namely that at this stage the drawing up of ambitious plans and blueprints is less useful than the dissipation of those fallacies which, unless they are dissipated in some measure, will make the carrying out of even the best plans impossible. Most of these books wisely conform to that condition.

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Gold Rush Diarist

THE JOURNALS, DRAWINGS, AND OTHER PAPERS OF J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF, CAPTAIN, Washington City and California Mining Association: April 2, 1843—July 20, 1851. Edited by Georgia Willis Read and Ruth Gaines. New York: Columbia University Press. 1944. 2 *vols.* 1404 *pp.* $15.

Reviewed by DIXON WECTER

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF, a civil servant who left his draughting board in the Bureau of Topographical Engineers in '49, to organize a mining company and start for the fabulous West, went equipped with the best maps, sketch pad, and notebook, an "odometer" to measure the miles, and a stout heart. He was forty-three years old: a trained geologist, competent artist, mediocre poet, and diarist of keen eye and dogged purpose. The resulting journals, here first published, form one of the basic documents in the history of the Forty-Niners. Apparently it is the best diary of its kind ever to see the light.

The impact of that huge trek, in the wake of rumors flooding back from Sutter's Mill, is sometimes forgotten in the mass of picturesque detail. The editors cite the statement of H. H. Bancroft, dean of California annalists, that the number of homes broken by the Gold Rush was "but little less than that inflicted by the Civil War ten years later." Bruff's journal, as they rightly say, goes far to correct an impression among some recent historians that the Overland Trail was a sort of transcontinental picnic, with beer and skittles for all. These daily entries and sketches restore the heroic temper of that saga, with its hunger and thirst, cholera, scurvy, domestic tragedy, terrors by day and night, and sudden death. Bruff's starving time, in the winter of 1849-50, when he debated killing and devouring "my faithful watch [dog]—my poor little Nevada, who has shared all my sufferings," when he even trailed a redskin with the fancy that "I might soon get a broil off an Indian's leg," recalls the horror of the Donner party. Yet even in the grimmest ordeal, humanity keeps breaking through. At the point of decision, Bruff could no more kill his dog than he could shoot in the back an Indian who had made a friendly gesture in his direction. To multiply the complications of that winter, in its earlier phase Bruff adopted a starveling waif of four, whose father had abused and deserted the child. What follows sounds a little like a Bret Harte story. Bruff starved

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himself to give the lad such scraps as he could forage, soothed him to sleep, generally carried him in his arms through the snows. When at last the boy died—ironically enough, of eating at his first square meal some biscuits which a pioneer's wife had baked, after mistaking caustic soda for saleratus—Bruff dug his grave and buried him under a pathetic epitaph.

Bruff, incidentally, was a great connoisseur of epitaphs, and records literally scores from newly-made graves along the California and Oregon Trail. He also reports upon false graves, where canny travelers expecting to return had cached supplies under the supposed immunity of a headstone—tumuli which, as he relates on one occasion, "some cute chaps had opened and emptied," adding below the epitaph a postcript, "The fools are not all dead yet." But the majority were genuine. These journals leave one with a sense of the vast waste, the flotsam of heavy casualties, left by this madness of the Argonauts. Hundreds of broken and abandoned wagons, dead oxen, discarded equipment, and shattered hopes that ended in death on the lone prairie—such was the panorama of the Great Plains and the Far West in 1849 and 1850. Indeed the loneliness of those spaces has seldom been caught so well as in these pages.

In respect to many details these journals confirm the picture-book story of the Forty-Niners: the glimmering firelight, the noise of fiddles, the creaking bulk of covered wagons and gaunt-faced drivers moving west by some frantic compulsion in the blood. In other ways they becloud the simplicity of legend with the complexity of life. For instances, the frontier's privations made some men and women warmer neighbors, devoted doctors, affectionate foster parents for the orphan, and Samaritans to all in need—in the old tradition of out where the West begins. But others developed an equally characteristic callousness, even moroseness, under the stark struggle for survival: a mood, we are told, which persisted on the Pacific shores until "assured of at least enough to eat if not wealth . . . they thawed back to their normal natures." Bruff describes both kinds with equal fidelity.

The editors often present the same story in two journals: the rough jottings which Bruff made on the spur of the moment, and the more literary, sometimes turgidly romantic, version when he came to revise. The originals, owned in part by the diarist's granddaughter and in part by the Huntington Library, thus offer an interesting contrast in idioms, along with masses of sketches and poems. Bruff was an irrepressible rhymester. On the trail to Fort Kearny, to meet that Captain (now Colonel) Bonneville whom Washington Irving had made famous, Bruff the green explorer sent ahead of the party his visiting card on which he had scribbled—

> Our banner flutters in the breeze,
> In spite of Sioux and black pawnees.

In general, Bruff the poet and Bruff the polisher must yield the palm to the diarist with camera eye and instantaneous impression.

These volumes are superbly edited and handsomely published. Upon their task the editors spent some ten years. Their introduction is admirable. The notes are scholarly and full—of such plenitude that they light up not only the travels of Bruff from Washington to California and back via the Isthmus, but the whole Westward movement at full tide. Readers of memorable books from "The Oregon Trail" to "The Year of Decision" will find these journals a rich amplification of the knowledge they already have. Very rarely do the editors leave anything to be desired. One wonders, for example, if the Lieut. Andrew J. Donelson from Tennessee whom Bruff met at Fort Kearny is not the son of Andrew Jackson's nephew, namesake, and adopted son? But almost everywhere the editors have clarified every detail, answering all queries in advance, and achieved a model in the handling of historical documents of high intrinsic value.

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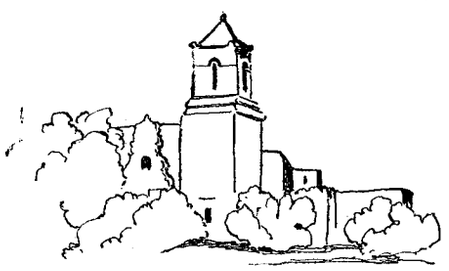
Mexican Guide

MEXICO: MAGNETIC SOUTHLAND. By Sidney A. Clark. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1944. 239 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BETTY KIRK

TRAVELLERS to Mexico will be tucking this book under their arms by the hundreds when the post-war tourist boom southward resumes, for it is the first comprehensive guidebook on Mexico to appear in over a decade. The only thing likely to deter them from discovering it is the misleading title which in no way indicates that "Mexico: Magnetic Southland" is a guide book. From the title it sounds like merely another interpretation of that often interpreted —and misinterpreted—land.

Two qualities make the book invaluable for travelers southward. The first is its comprehensiveness, for nothing

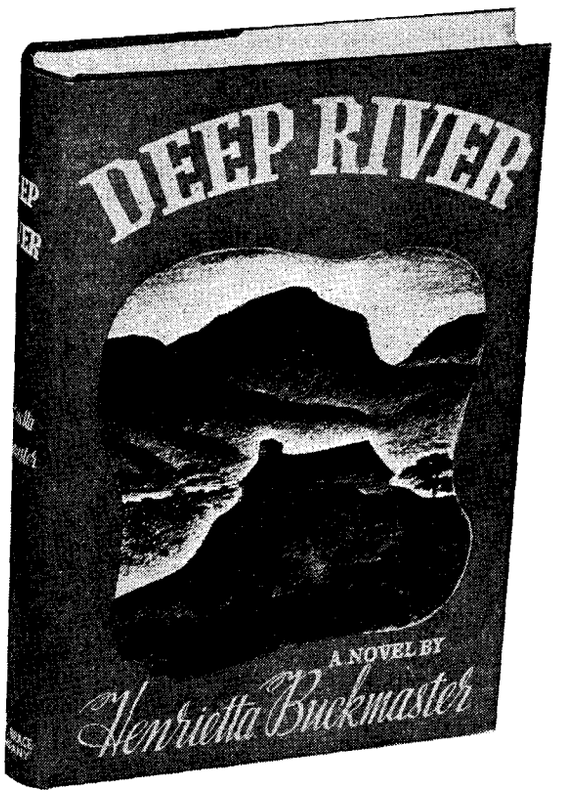


has been overlooked. There's wise advice on how to deal with "the altitude," philosophical observations on the vagaries of guides, and comforting notes on the complications of the double telephone system in the capital. After clarifying this "tremendous trivia" which is often just the thing that exasperates the new tourist, the author trips on to cover his subject blithely from Cortes to King Carol.

The second quality which makes it an appealing book is its freshness and up-to-the-minute reporting on where to go and how. Churches and cantinas, bullfights and beaches are introduced with great accuracy as to time, price, and place, and considerable charm as to style. There seems to be nowhere that Mr. Clark hasn't gone and he's captured the flavor of most places with discrimination and zest.

One of his most valuable contributions is of the trip to see "The mighty fires of Paricutin," Mexico's volcano-in-birth. Were there no world war on, Paricutin would be the mecca for travellers from all over the world. But even with the war for competition it has attracted thousands to witness one of the greatest natural phenomena of our time.

The illustrations are tempting, the maps well done and the advice on eating, drinking, and making merry in Mexico can be followed with complete confidence.



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The Phoenix Nest

WILL C. J. FERN of the National Fantasy Fan Federation kindly get in touch with the following, who wish to know more concerning this organization:

Beatrice H. Allison,
Niagara Sanatorium,
Lockport, New York.

David I. Segal
139-29 223 Street,
Laurelton, Long Island.

and P. M. Stone,
12 Lexington Terrace
Waltham, Massachusetts.

Unfortunately I have lost the Federation's address, and should like to receive it, in case any further inquiries come in. The last-named of the inquirers, Mr. Stone, writes me to this effect:

> Some of your readers might be interested to know that Frederick B. Shroyer of Decatur, Indiana, has been engaged for several years upon an exhaustive bibliography devoted to fantastic literature. Mr. Shroyer is now an officer in the United States Army and of necessity the work has been set aside for the time being. He hopes to resume work upon the title list at no too distant date. When Mr. Shroyer wrote to me in 1940 he had in his possession full or partial information relating to some 3000 titles. It is also reported that Ben Abramson, late of Chicago, who now invades the New York literary shop, has announced for early publication another scholarly work devoted to the Fantasy Div. of American fiction. Stories properly belonging to this field of imaginative writing are, by the way, far removed from the "chills and horrors" narratives fashioned by the late H. P. Lovecraft and his followers; they are as a rule of superior order so far as plot fabric and characterization are concerned, and in the vast majority of cases they are far better written. Three fantastic stories of outstanding merit which have appeared fairly recently are: "Out of the Silence," by Erle Cox (1928), "Land Under England," by Joseph O'Neill (1935), and "The Hopkins Manuscript," by R. C. Sherriff (1939).

Alfred H. P. Sayers compliments Earle F. Walbridge on the extent of his bibliographical knowledge (a further example of which follows) and incidentally remarks "But the difference between what his probable remuneration is as a college reference librarian, and his true merits, is so astonishing that it is a reflection on the writer's status in our civilization." I should say, rather, that it is a reflection upon how badly we pay anyone associated with the processes of education in this country, though I believe that salaries in the New York Public Schools are really very good. I have long wondered why we regard education and the knowledge of books as so vitally important, and often begrudge a decent living to anyone with expertness in that field. Earle Walbridge, incidentally, thinks that Thomas Heyrick never met up with or knew in any other fashion Amber, Countess of Danforth, later Duchess of Ravenspur! As to Anthony Brewer, concerning whom Christopher Morley lately inquired, "Antony (not Anthony) Brewer was flourishing in 1655, when he published a play in verse, 'The Love-Sick King, an English Tragical History,' revived at the King's Theatre in 1680 and reprinted that year under the title 'The Perjured Nun.' The Dictionary of National Biography cautions that one shouldn't ascribe to Brewer 'Lingua, or the Combat of the Five Senses for Superiority' (1607)." Starr Nelson flew to the Dictionary to look up a busk, which she had thought was an old Greek boot. "But now I see it isn't, although it is laced up. . . ."

Anent the Keats Fund business, which I had but hazily recollected. Again E. F. W. supplies me with the low-down. It seems that £2,534 for Keats House in Keats Grove, Hampstead, was raised by that committee, and the house was duly and formally opened by the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch on 9th May, 1925. "An Encyclopaedia of London" (Dutton, 1937) further deposeth:

> "The mus. and lib., opened in 1931, has been built upon the site of the stables and outbuildings erected by Miss Chester [an actress who bought the house in 1938] and her successors. Here and in the house is a unique collection of K. relics. There is Fanny Brawne's portrait and her engagement ring, a lock of K.'s hair, and his copy of Shakespeare. There are a number of letters: one added in 1935 gives information to his sister Fanny on her approaching confirmation. The latest acquisitions are Fanny Brawne's letters to Fanny K. There is Thos. Hardy's poem on the house in his own handwriting. In 1935 there was presented the original of the bust of K. (the work of Anne Whitney), a replica of which is in the par. ch. The latter, a gift of American admirers, was unveiled in 1894, and was Hampstead's first tribute to the poet. The invitation card was designed by Wm. Morris and the party gathered at Sir Walter Besant's house at Frognal. The speech was delivered by (Sir) Edmund Gosse."
>
> As an average reader, I was able to deduce the meaning of busk-point, perhaps helped by the recollection of a personage in Noel Coward's autobiography, "Present Indicative," "a strange Negress called Gertrude, who appeared for an hour or so every morning and ambled lethargically about with a broom. Her clothes were garish, oddly shaped, and a detached stay-busk reared itself up from the small of her back like a crane."

By accident the name and address of the sculptress of the Keats plaque Mr. Morley mentioned in a letter I quoted a short time ago was omitted when my paragraph on her was printed. It is Miss Muriel Caswell, 86 Charles St., Boston 14, Mass.

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PERSONALS

(*Continued from page* 33)

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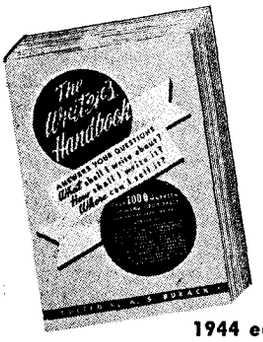

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The Crostics Club

YOU will be relieved to hear that your protests over No. 553 will not have been in vain. We are to use a different procedure in the hope of preventing such mix-ups in the future. But we can't dismiss the matter without letting you enjoy with us at least a few of the many amusing notes received. Space doesn't admit of more. From our DC Laureate, J. T. Hatfield, Evanston, Ill.:

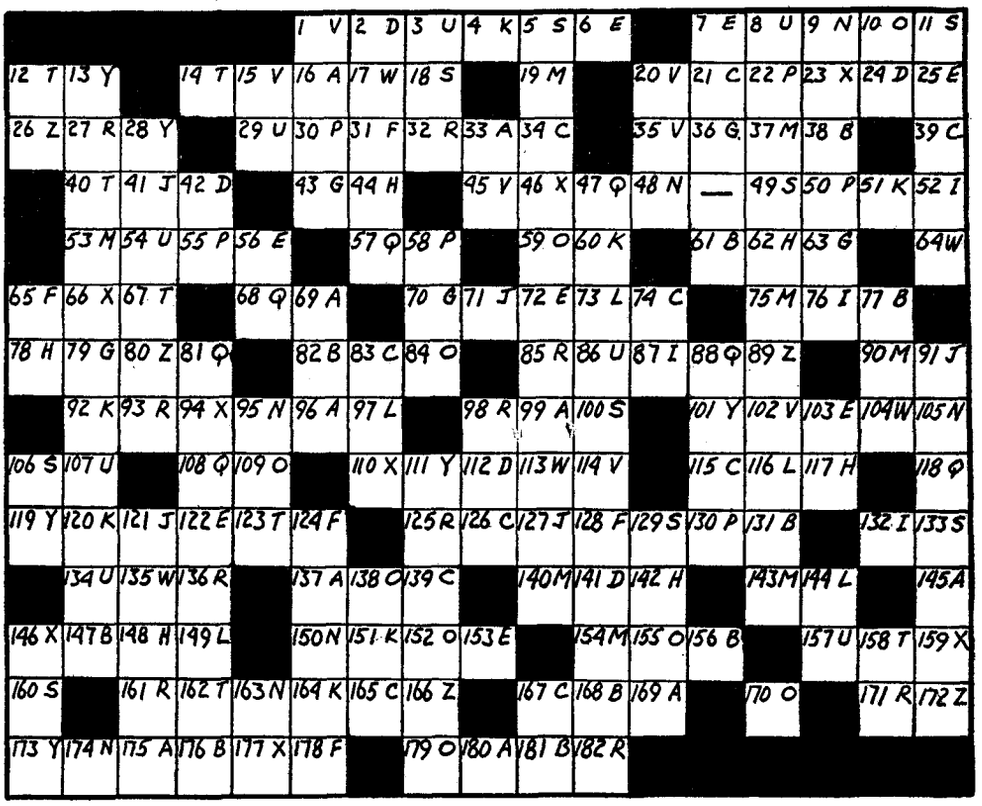
Against stiff odds I'm game to gamble,
And Borden's War I did unscramble;
But, though Variety is grateful,
I don't approve *quite* such a plate-full!

Beatrice Currie, Chicago: "I'm patting myself on the back for having solved No. 553. Anyhow it was a good workout and my brain is safe from mildew this week." Leon Lipton, Washington, D. C.: "Orchids to me who solved this week's hash in forty minutes without referring to any books or tearing my thick thatch even once." K. B., postmark, airmail, obscured: "I caught the disarrangement quickly, decoded it and had the puzzle solved in a couple of hours, enjoying it the more for what must have seemed to you a mishap. . . ." Frances Tobey, Greeley, Colo.:

Your "553" is so *imbibitory*
As to be—for my wits—quite prohibitory;
But since I like *pie*—
I can't let it slip by!
So behold here my hard-earned exhibitory.

Harry Ober and family, Brookline, Mass.: "However, it is this sort of puzzle that we get a big kick out of solving, albeit fuming in the process. I presume those who fume and do *not* solve have their blood-pressures climb, since the outlet is not provided to let the steam down." Mrs. Jennie A. Cole and Mrs. Lee W. Barber, Fond Du Lac, Wis.: "We are quite proud of ourselves —we finally *dug* this one out. We wager that none of the 'speed fiends' did this one in 15 minutes." Rabbi Emil W. Leipziger, New Orleans: "Congratulations on the advent of your new kind of puzzle No. 553! I should call it a 'double cross' Anagram. According to this puzzle 'job requiring little effort' is 'oceans' and 'immense expanse' is 'nutritive' and 'affording nourishment' is 'stuffed shirt.' Other little inversions have made it a triumph in modernistic puzzledom." Frances Ames Randall, Duxbury, Mass.: "I am so elated at having solved No. 553 in spite of the printer's errors that I felt I must report it to you." And as a last lingering thought on the subject, I call your attention to *The New Yorker* of Nov. 11, with its typical comment on Orville Prescott's *N. Y. Times Book Review* of Russell Davenport's poem, "My Country," wherein a line inserted as his own critical comment by O. P. was retained by the printer as part of the quoted selections from the poem and passed the proofreader.

E. S. K.



Double-Crostics: No. 557

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 25 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. To endure hard conditions until better ones come (3 wds.)

B. A comfortable state or situation (Fig.; 2 wds.)

C. Out of the current of events (3 wds.)

D. Letter of the Greek alphabet.

E. Manifesting lack of due caution.

F. Old Norse poetry.

G. A division of the western Finns.

H. To sort good coins from bad.

I. An American bird (warbler) with a dome-shaped nest on the ground.

J. Customary or conventional.

K. The greatest of ancient sculptors.

L. First name of heroine in title of novel by O. W. Holmes (1861).

M. Island group south of Sulu Archipelago, P. I.

N. Subjected to unkind or cruel treatment (Comp.)

O. Relating to the union of the divine and the human.

P. Heroine of one of the "Idylls of the King."

Q. City of central Palestine where Joseph's bones were buried.

R. Personal pronoun, reflexive or emphatic form.

S. Third of a trilogy by Aeschylus (with *The*).

T. To set at liberty.

U. Peculiar persons, things, etc.

V. Pretentious display (Colloq.; comp.)

W. Second daughter of Queen Victoria.

X. Biographer of Sir Walter Scott (1794-1854).

Y. To be a fixed element or attribute.

Z. Manufacturing city of Prussia.

WORDS

169 145 137 16 33 175 96 69 180 99

131 156 82 61 38 147 181 176 168 77

115 126 165 167 39 83 34 139 21 74

24 112 42 141 2

6 56 7 122 72 153 25 103

31 65 124 178 128

36 70 43 79 63

117 62 148 142 44 78

132 87 52 76

91 71 127 41 121

92 4 164 51 120 151 60

97 73 144 116 149

154 19 140 90 37 75 53 143

95 163 105 9 174 48 150

10 155 109 170 138 84 152 59 179

30 130 50 22 55 58

68 57 88 118 108 81 47

136 125 93 161 98 182 85 32 27 171

5 11 49 129 133 106 160 100 18

12 123 14 158 162 40 67

8 157 134 54 3 86 107 29

114 45 15 35 102 20 1

104 113 135 64 17

177 46 23 110 146 159 66 94

111 173 119 28 101 13

172 26 89 80 166

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